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(PART 2)

CONFIDENTIAL

NARRATIVE DESPATCHES

FROM THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR PALESTINE

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

REPORTING ON THE

SITUATION IN PALESTINE

FROM

1st JANUARY, 1939

TO

20th AUGUST, 1939

(PART 1 OF THIS VOLUME CONTAINS SIMILAR DESPATCHES COVERING THE PERIOD 26th SEPTEMBER, 1937, TO 31st DECEMBER, 1938).

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No. 1

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

to

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Received 9th March, 1939)

(SECRET)

Jerusalem, 27th February, 1939.

Sir,

In my last narrative despatch*, I recorded events up to the end of 1938. This despatch will give an account of affairs in Palestine from the 1st January, 1939, till the eve of the discussions in London, viz., the 6th February.

2. Politically, that period was one of great activity for both the Arabs and the Jews who were jockeying for position and representation in the discussions. The Seychelles exiles were the first in the field. On the night of the 1st January they arrived in Cairo and were met by Egyptian notables and Palestinians residing in Cairo, supported by a crowd mainly composed of students from Al Azhar university and a band of boy scouts. Jamal Eff. al Husseini and Musa Eff. al Alami of the Palestine Arabs also greeted them. After paying courtesy visits they were due to leave for Beirut on the 4th. They did not leave on that date, however, and rumours circulated freely regarding the reason for the delay. At first it was alleged that His Majesty's Government had persuaded the French not to allow them to meet the Mufti on Lebanese territory and that, although they would be allowed to go to the Etats du Levant, they would only be permitted to communicate with Haj Amin by telephone or letter. The true reason for the difficulties was that the Syrian and Lebanese authorities were apprehensive lest the presence of the Seychelles exiles in their country might result in an aggravation of their local difficulties. This fact was evident from the actual conditions at first laid down by the French, namely, that the exiles could meet Haj Amin to discuss Palestinian problems but could not have any contacts with other political bodies or the Press, and must reside during their stay in the places appointed for them.

These conditions were ultimately modified as the result of conversations between the Egyptian Prime Minister and the High Commissioner for Syria, and the Seychelles exiles at last left for Beirut on the 11th January.

3. They met the Mufti of Jerusalem at Djounie. Nothing definite is known of what passed at that meeting beyond the resolutions which were sent to the Press on the 17th January. By these resolutions the delegation bound themselves to the so called Arab 'national covenant' as their minimum demands which include:-

(a) acknowledgment of the right of the Arabs to independence in Palestine;

(b) abandonment of the experiment of the establishment of the Jewish National Home;

(c) termination of the Mandate and its replacement by a treaty similar to the Anglo-Iraq Treaty, by which a sovereign Arab state would be set up in Palestine;

(d) stoppage of Jewish immigration and prohibition of the sale of land to Jews.

Tactically an important element at the meeting was the manoeuvre by which the Mufti sought to recover the loss of face which he had suffered by being expressly excluded from the London discussions. This was done by the committee choosing thirteen delegates to take part in the discussions on behalf of Palestine, at the head of whom was 'His Eminence the President of the Arab Higher Committee', Haj Amin el Husseini.

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* No. 13 in Part I

4. The thirteen nominees in their turn supposedly chose six of their number together with two secretaries to represent them. The Mufti himself 'stood down' from going to London and chose his cousin and right-hand man, Jamal Eff. al Husseini, to head the London delegation. The five other delegates were Auni Bey Abdul Hadi, advocate, head of the prominent Jenin family of that name, and founder of the erstwhile Istiqlal (independence) party; Dr. Hussein el Khalidi, one of the Seychelles deportees, ex-mayor of Jerusalem, a Defence Party man before he turned his coat in time to attain the mayoralty; Alfred Eff. Rock, a Christian landowner - all of these three being members of the former Arab Higher Committee; Musa Eff. al Alami, once Government Advocate, now on pension and former Arab private secretary to Sir Arthur Wauchope, a devoted adherent of the Husseinis; and Amin Bey el Tamimi, a former member of the Supreme Moslem Council and also fanatically pro-Mufti. The two secretaries were Mr. George Antonius, C.B.E., a Christian lawyer and writer, by birth a Lebanese, by his interests and talents the foremost of the Palestine Arabs in learning and the social arts; and Fuad Eff. Saba, also a Christian, an ex-Seychelles deportee and formerly secretary of the Arab Higher Committee.

5. These persons could theoretically claim to be representative of all the Palestine Arab parties except the Defence Party and it will be noted that three Christians were included. In effect, they were a selection from the members of the former Arab Higher Committee, which itself was a coalition of all the Palestine Arab parties and was formed in 1936 at a time of 'national emergency'. A plausible reason for the exclusion of the Defence Party representatives was that they had seceded from the Arab Higher Committee in 1937 before the publication of the Royal Commission's Report* and, in so doing, had forfeited the right to representation on the delegation. The Mufti, fully realizing the importance of the appearance of a representative body not constructed on purely party lines, was careful to avoid the charge of nepotism and favouritism as regards old henchmen of the Husseini faction. He strengthened his nominees by the inclusion of such a man as Antonius, who had previously held somewhat aloof from platform politics. At the same time he was able to find in these eight men, with their heterogeneous political backgrounds, a delegation which, he felt, would faithfully pursue his 'extremist' policy.

6. Of the original thirteen delegates, the five passed over were the Mufti himself, Ahmad Hilmi Pasha and Ya'qub Eff. el Ghussein (both of whom were deported to the Seychelles), Abdul Latif Eff. Salah and Izzat Eff. Darwazeh. Ahmad Hilmi, director of the Arab bank, officially declined to go to London for reasons of health. He was probably not sent because he is more or less illiterate and a poor debater. The third and fourth mentioned are minor henchmen of the Mufti whose inclusion would not have strengthened the delegation. Izzat Darwazeh, formerly Director-General of Awqaf, member of the Arab Higher Committee and for a long time past the organizer of the revolt at the Damascus headquarters, was required there to continue to direct rebellious activities.

7. The resolutions at the Djounie meeting were boldly intransigeant, but it is believed that these demands represent in fact the maximum at which the delegates in London will aim. The minimum demands are supposed to be a restricted Jewish immigration, perhaps to between 5,000 and 10,000 a year, so long as the Jews do not exceed a fixed minority percentage of the total population of Palestine; some restriction of land sales, and the establishment of an elective assembly whose members would be proportionate to the strength of the respective communities. Secondly, as will be apparent from what has been said already, there was not such unanimity at the meeting as outwardly appeared. Dr. Khalidi and Auni Abdulhadi were more inclined to moderation than the others. Thirdly, it is a legitimate inference from later events that the meeting agreed that it was essential to intensify terrorism rather than to modify it, both before and during the discussions. The object of this was probably to inform world opinion of what would happen if the Arab demands were not met and to forestall any claims preferred by the Nashashibis or on their behalf to the effect that their influence had resulted in a cessation of hostilities.

8. On the 14th January, after the completion of their consultations in the Lebanon, the delegates selected to go to London returned to Cairo, and there on the 17th discussions began with the representatives of the Arab states. There

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* Cmd. 5894

was a delay of two days between the two conferences because Nuri Pasha es Said did not reach Egypt till the 16th: on his journey from Baghdad, he had met the Amir Abdullah in Amman and the Mufti in the Lebanon. The Cairo discussions which lasted for five days were important in that the Palestine Arabs, for the first time, engaged in debate with Arabs from neighbouring countries. They had to find a common Arab formula and, from reports reaching this country, it seems that this was difficult. Apart from the red herring of the Caliphate, the two most important questions raised were the representation of the Defence Party and the constitution of that independent Arab state of Palestine which the Palestine Arabs ostensibly desired. On both these points, the Mufti received some unwelcome shocks.

9. In the first place as regards the Defence Party, the general opinion was that it should be accorded some recognition. The Palestine Arabs could not undertake to agree to this without reference to their mentor. Nuri Pasha accordingly had to fly to Beirut on the 22nd to persuade the Mufti to modify his policy in this connection. He was accompanied by Jamal Husseini and Fuad Bey Hamza of the Saudi Arabian Foreign Ministry. After some discussion, Haj Amin agreed that Ya'cub Farraj, a Christian, and Haj Nimr el Nabulsi might be appointed. The former was too ill to go to London and the latter was a convert to the Husseini platform. The Mufti's obstinacy in this matter, though condoned by the representatives of the Arab States at the time, did not assist his cause. Ragheb Bey Nashashibi, who had consistently disowned Fakhri Bey, was impelled to come out into the open and on the 22nd issued a statement to the Press urging that his party should have equal representation with that of the Mufti and, further, that the president of the Palestine Arab delegation should be either an independent or one of his men. The rest of the period in question was, so far as Arab politics are concerned, devoted to the efforts of the Defence Party to get together a delegation.

10. Before proceeding to outline the gist of these negotiations, something should be said about the background of the manoeuvre. It will be recalled that when Fakhri Nashashibi resuscitated the Defence Party in October last, he was at once disowned by Ragheb, the head of the party. The Husseini faction, however, were well aware that this abnegation of political rights was dictated by fear of personal violence and early in January, before the Djounie meeting, Ahmad Hilmi Pasha was deputed to approach Ragheb with an invitation to accompany the Arab Higher Committee delegated to London. Ragheb at that time declined to give a reply. On the 21st January, however, a message was published in the British Official Wireless Press stating, among other things, the following: "The feeling among many sections of Arab opinion is reported to be one of disappointment that the opportunity of settlement offered by the forthcoming London discussions is being compromised by the continuation of terrorism. It is said that many moderate Arabs are being led to ask whether the obstinacy of the Mufti and his associates, in a policy which is thought to serve the cause of certain foreign powers better than it does that of the Arabs, may not be due to self-interest".

11. This was strong meat from such an agency and well-informed circles realized the significance of the statement from that source regarding the representation of the Arab parties in London. It was certainly not lost on Fakhri Nashashibi who the day before had held a meeting of notables in his house in Jerusalem at which the following message was sent to Mohammad Mahmoud Pasha and others in Cairo: "We think it necessary to inform you that the Arabs of Palestine do not consider themselves at all represented in the form referred to by the Press, and consider that such representation is purely partisan". Ragheb Bey was at last goaded by these signs and portents into activity: he even added a threat that "if Britain ignores the Defence Party she will have to bear any consequences which may ensue".

12. It is alleged that there were two other reasons for Ragheb's volte face; firstly, the encouragement he had received from Tewfiq Pasha Abu el Huda, the Chief Minister to the Amir Abdullah, who had written to him and to Suleiman Bey Toukan, the mayor of Nablus, and Ahmad el Shaqa'a, the Nabulsi soap manufacturer, suggesting that they should reform the Defence Party; secondly, the influence of his wife. Eventually, then, Ragheb dared to come out into the open; but it must be already sufficiently clear, both from what has just been said and from previous history, that in the recent past the heaviest political handicap of the Nashashibi party is its head. Three years ago, even two years

ago, the Defence Party was a power in the land. It had a newspaper, "Falastin", and many of the mayors of the municipalities were its adherents. It represented the better-to-do elements in Arab society. Difficult as was its path in the face of terrorism and insidious propaganda seeking to show that it was unpatriotic, it is probable that if Ragheb were a man of firmer resolution his party would not have collapsed as it has.

13. The burden of getting the Defence Party delegates together in order to implement Ragheb's declaration fell on Fakhri. The period 29th January to 3rd February was occupied with these efforts. Anastas Hanania, a municipal councillor of Jerusalem who is now in self-imposed exile in the Lebanon, refused, as did Fuad Dajani, the well known Jaffa doctor, and Mohammad Yunis el Husseini, ex-manager of the agricultural bank who is now in Cairo. Abdul Raouf el Bitar, chairman of the Jaffa municipal commission and Fakhri's right-hand man, also made difficulties about going to London and so did Ali Mustakkim, rich landowner of Jaffa and friend of Bitar, and Eissa el Eissa, the proprietor of "Falastin". The delegates finally persuaded to go to the discussions were Suleiman Bey Toukan, reluctantly, and Haj Adel es Shawa, acting mayor of Gaza, besides Ragheb and Fakhri Nashashibi. While the main reason for so many of the 'opposition' refusing to represent the party is undoubtedly due to personal fear, it may be that the difficulty experienced in scraping together these delegates disposes of the claim advanced by Fakhri that his party represents 75 per cent. of the population of Palestine.

14. Before leaving the subject of the Defence Party, something must be said about their programme. Officially, the only difference between them and the Husseinis is in the means they advocate to attain a common end. There is, however, some reason to think that in practice they would favour the continuance of British rule in Palestine for some time to come, on the grounds that the country is not yet ripe for independence and that an Arab State in Palestine would be ruled exclusively by adherents of the Husseini faction. If this distinction can really be drawn between the Husseinis and Nashashibis, it is an important one. What it comes to is that while the former fear and dislike both the British and the Jews, the latter are hostile politically only to the Jews.

The 'Arab Higher Committee' delegates left Cairo for London on the 29th January except Dr. Khalidi who went by air on the 4th February. The Defence Party delegates also left on that date.

15. Meanwhile, the Jews were not inactive. The period was devoted by them to trying to show that the discussions in London would be of no use. Out of a plethora of pronouncements by different bodies, one by the executive committee of the General Council (Vaad Leumi) of Palestine Jews may be cited. It was issued on the 19th January. It stated that the achievements of the army and police had been weakened by a new political trend adopted by the Government. This trend of conciliation to the Arabs was exemplified by four major demarches:-

(a) the invitation of representatives of the neighbouring Arab States to the discussions, a step which had no precedent or warranty in the political and juridical constitution of Palestine;

(b) the opportunity afforded to the Mufti by the release of the Seychelles deportees, etc., to appoint the Palestine Arab delegates at his own free will and discretion;

(c) the refusal to allow the 10,000 children from Germany to enter Palestine, as the result of political pressure;

(d) the repeated statements by spokesmen of the British Government that the Mandate might conceivably be modified.

All the other protests from bodies within the Zionist organization were variations on this theme. Outside the organization, the Revisionists argued with monotonous persistence that Dr. Weizmann's policy was one of surrender. In their new daily, "Hamashkif", their antagonism to him was neatly if bitterly expressed as follows: "A certain American Zionist leader once said that what Zionism needed was 'tact and obstinacy'. Dr. Weizmann has both these qualities but to the Jews he shows obstinacy without tact, while to the English he is tactful without obstinacy".

16. The object of this campaign to discredit the discussions before they had begun is not at once easily discernible. It is suggested, however, that it may have been actuated by the desire to show the World how magnanimous the Jews were to collaborate and that the leaders were being more moderate and accommodating than their electors in co-operating with His Majesty's Government. Another reason may have been to ensure that the delegates in London should be at once kept in the path of Zionism and strengthened in the discussions by being able to point to this body of extreme opinion behind them. While it may seem harsh to seek for these disingenuous motives for what appears on the surface to be a spontaneous campaign, past experience and the political events of the month apparently substantiate the theories.

On the other hand, however, mention should be made of the popular Jewish view that the discussions are useless, since they must result in greater or lesser defeats for Zionism. The Jewish man in the street holds tenaciously to the view that peace as well as order can be achieved by military measures. He fears a political solution of the Palestine problem, because it will be at his expense. He is fighting today for the right to live in this country and enter it freely. He maintains that whereas Palestine is for the Jews a matter of life and death, to the Arabs it is one of mere prestige.

17. Yet, in spite of protestations, the elected assembly of the Jewish community, whose executive committee had condemned the discussions, did in fact on the 30th choose representatives to go to London to advise the delegates. In the result those men chosen were the best who could be found. Rabbi Herzog of Jerusalem is the outstanding personality of the Ashkenazic community; Rabbi Uziel of Tel Aviv is the chief political figure of the Sephardim; Berl Katznelson, the editor of the powerful daily "Davar", and Suprassky represented Labour; Mossinsohn is an important figure in middle-class Jewish circles; while Ben Zvi, the chairman of the Executive of the Vaad Leumi and Ussishkin, the head of the Jewish National Fund, went in their own right, as leaders of political Zionism for many years. These persons will sit on the Advisory Council of forty, which will assist the delegates at the London discussions. The secondary purpose of the Council is also believed to be that of acting as an emergency committee, which would determine the future policy of Jewry if the Jewish delegates withdrew from the discussions.

18. The section of Jewry which, as might have been expected, consistently and vehemently opposed the discussions were the Revisionists. In the latter part of January they signified their displeasure by deeds as well as words. The especial object of their dislike has long been the Kofer Hayishuv (Defence Fund), for which the Zionists levy quasi-compulsory contributions by demanding a percentage of all takings from bus companies, cinemas, theatres, etc. besides holding periodical collection days. The reason for their dislike of this "tax" is that the proceeds are used to buy rifles for and pay the ghaffirs, who are normally not Revisionists; and also to arm the illegal "Hagana" militia from which the Revisionists are excluded. Accordingly, bombs were placed by them in the offices of the Kofer at Jerusalem, the cars of Kofer officials were damaged, and explosives were deposited in the offices of transport companies at Nathanya and Haifa which support the fund. Finally, a demonstration by Revisionist students was staged at the Hebrew university.

19. A distinguished American special correspondent who came to Jerusalem in January said that all the Arabs whom she met protested that they were extremists yet professed moderate views; while the Jews, who all styled themselves "moderates", held extreme opinions. This paradox is in many respects a clever generalisation. At the same time it must be borne in mind that, comparatively speaking, the Jewish party in power now is moderate while the Arab party in the ascendent is extremist. As an instance of the moderation of the Jewish authorities, it is pertinent to record that the Jews of Haifa, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem wrote early in January to the Vaad Leumi, suggesting that they might stage demonstrations against the decision of the Government not to allow the refugee children from Germany to enter Palestine. The Vaad Leumi advised against demonstrations but said that the local communities should make representations to their respective District Commissioners. It is conceivable that a drastic change of policy at the expense of the Jews might result in the emergence of Revisionism as the strongest Jewish faction in Palestine; such an eventuality would bode no good to Britain.

20. The official platform of Zionism at the start of the discussions was the full implementation of the Mandate and unrestricted immigration up to the limit of the absorptive capacity of the country; parity with the Arabs and no restrictions on the purchase of land. It is believed, however, that the discussions, so far as the Jews are concerned, will hinge on the question of immigration alone. They would not care particularly if land sales were restricted as the Jewish National Fund has considerable reserves of unallocated land for settlement, and they believe they would be able to circumvent any restriction by buying further land through Christian intermediaries who are favourable to their cause.

21. As regards public security, the period was no better than the latter part of December. The improvement which was apparent in late November and early December was not maintained. During the first half of January there were few gangs in the hills, due to the absence of their leaders in Damascus and the Lebanon. They went there primarily to get orders and not because they ran away, and nearly all of them returned in late January and the first days of February. While they were away, insecurity was kept alive by increased terrorism in the towns, particularly in Jaffa and Jerusalem. At the beginning of January, also, the gangsters concentrated on the collection of funds from the Arab populace, particularly in Jaffa. This illegal "taxation" only ceased in that town after a collector had been arrested. Apart, however, from political crime, assassinations and the like, the month saw the emergence of that follower of a time of lawlessness, the blood feud. In the Haifa sub-district and the Huleh, this took the form of clan fights within the village, and of antagonism between the Druzes and the Moslems. In the Hebron sub-district, insecurity is the result not so much of antagonism to the Government or the Jews, who impinge little upon them, but of the age-old feud between the villages south of Hebron and Hebron town itself. In this connection it will be recalled that the first Nashashibi demonstration was at Yatta, a village south of Hebron; and it was said at the time, and has been freely said since, that the Government organized that meeting. In the result, administration is rendered extremely difficult in that area, because Hebron distrusts the Government's intentions; it has even been bruited abroad that the villagers in the Yatta neighbourhood have been provided with rifles in order to keep the Hebronites in check.

22. It may be added that other purely local incidents often lead, in the present state of tension, to increased insecurity in a particular area. For instance, the arrest early in January of a private-school master at Lydda, who was the local agent for Aref Abdul Razzak, resulted in the intensification of rebel activities in the Ramle area.

In the Jenin area, inter-gang warfare is also a cause of disturbance. Fakhri Abdulhadi and the Irsheid family of Sir village are the leaders of factions which oppose the regular bands who take orders from Damascus. These leaders take drastic action against the 'orthodox' mujahideen, but in other parts of the country there is considerable propaganda in the form of pamphlets against the internecine war which the gangsters wage against their fellow Arabs. Occasionally, arising out of this, the worm turns and the attacked Arab or his relative retaliates.

23. Military operations continued to be largely searches of villages, as described in the statement by the War Office of the 10th January. Better information has resulted in considerable seizures of firearms and ammunition. The numbers seized by troops during the four weeks 31st December to 27th January inclusive were:- rifles 84, shotguns 14, pistols and revolvers, 45, rifle ammunition over 4,000 rounds, shotgun ammunition over 250 rounds, pistol ammunition 200 rounds. During this period, 204 villages were searched and in engagements, etc., 75 Arab bandits were killed.

24. The British police, which has been very considerably augmented, has also played its part in the perpetual battle against lawlessness. The Force was deeply moved by the trial of the four constables, Mansell, Wood, Crossley and Crossley, for the alleged murder of an Arab prisoner in Jaffa. I have been in separate correspondence with you about this case and I shall be sending you copies of the judgments of the Courts concerned as soon as they are available. It is not necessary further to refer to it in this despatch.

25. Before proceeding to a narrative of the events of the period, something should be said of the general economic and administrative position of the country, with particular reference to the travel restrictions enforced.

Citrus prices fell recently, with adverse effects on the growers and shippers. It is believed, however, that there is still comparatively little unemployment among the Jews, and the Arabs are not in danger of starvation. The mayor of Tel Aviv complained to the District Commissioner, Southern District, that there was poverty among the Jews, but this approach was apparently made because he had heard that relief funds were available for the destitute. In general, municipal affairs in Jaffa and Ramle are in better order, because of the appointment of a municipal commission at Jaffa on the 5th January and the return of its efficient mayor to Ramle, where water rates are at last being regularly collected.

As regards Arab agriculture, the weather has been favourable for the crops, but there have been losses due to an infestation of field mice.

In spite of the prevailing insecurity, the country is more normally administered now than it was three months ago. The governorate at Beersheba, for instance, has been re-occupied and the tribal court there has been re-opened. The appointment of Rushdi Shawa to the mayoralty of Gaza, in succession to Fahmi Husseini, has also led to greater municipal activity.

The return of Suleiman Bey Tukan, the mayor of Nablus, on the 26th January is also some indication that conditions may be on the mend. It is understood that he intends to demonstrate his independence by requiring the townsmen to wear the tarbush in place of the peasant's kaffiye and 'agal.

In Tulkarm taxes are once more being partially collected, as are municipal rates, and the Assistant District Commissioner is beginning again to tour the Arab villages.

In general, arrangements have been made to start tax collection in February throughout the country.

26. As regards the travel restrictions, it was announced early in January that all passes issued to Arabs, enabling them to drive or travel in private motor cars, would be invalid after the 12th. The holders of such passes had to have them renewed and very often renewal was refused, particularly in respect of vehicles plying for hire between towns. Inter-urban Arab 'buses were uniformly disallowed, the frontiers between Palestine and the Lebanon and Syria were closed to Arab traffic and permanent passes to Arabs allowing them to travel each day between, say, Jerusalem and Jaffa were very sparingly granted. The Military Commanders imposed these restrictions because it had come to their notice that terrorists had sniped at individuals from taxis. Although these restrictions did not apply to vehicles carrying merchandise, so that the citrus trade was unaffected, they bore hardly on Arab merchants and landowners in the exercise of their professions. Necessary as they were, they constituted a check on the normal business of the country.

Other minor restrictions imposed during the period were a prohibition against Arabs using boats on the Sea of Galilee, and very frequent 24-hour curfews after assassinations and attempts in the towns. In Jerusalem, for instance, the firing of a gun three times became the operative order by which such a curfew was imposed on the Old City, excluding the Jewish and Armenian quarters.

27. Measures designed to bring the Arab population under control included the building of concrete walls in the alleys of the Haifa suq and the erection of a wall on the boundary of the Jewish quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. Numbers of Arabs took out identity cards during January throughout the country and a recent instruction to the troops enjoins the issue of such cards to all persons who are checked during village searches. In the long run, this scheme will probably go far towards the aim of having a reliable record of every able-bodied male in Palestine.

As regards the general attitude of the Arabs, it may be stated that most of them are now weary of the continued insecurity and terrorism. The mukhtars of two villages near Jenin have recently been bold enough to express their resentment. Recent events, however, supported by continuous propaganda, have confirmed the Arabs in their belief that the Mufti will eventually return to

Palestine in a position of unchallenged power, and so long as this belief persists, his orders for the continuance of the terror will still receive the grudging obedience of a large section of the population. It is to be supposed that, if this belief were removed, the troubles would at once be deprived of a great part of their motive power.

28. I will now outline the main incidents which occurred from January 1st to February 6th. On the 1st an Arab port labourer was shot and seriously wounded in Haifa; four Arab suspects were detained in connection with this crime. On the 3rd a Jewish ghaffir was killed when on duty in a settlement near Rehovoth; and three Jews were killed and one wounded when a party of employees of Palestine Potash, Limited, were attacked at the southern end of the Dead Sea. Those murdered were an engineer, a foreman of works and a constable. The Jewish police sergeant who was in charge of the party was unhit, kept his head and succeeded in extricating himself from the ambush and getting help from the police post at Jebel Uzdum. The incident is of particular importance, since the area had been reasonably secure up to this time; it is believed that the brigands came that day on a foray from the Hebron area.

29. On the night of the 3/4th the governorate at Beersheba was set on fire, considerable damage being done; and on the 4th an Arab was shot dead near Sarafand and the Jewish driver of a municipal garbage truck was seriously wounded by a Bedu at the slaughter-house just outside Jerusalem. Both these incidents occurred in the middle of the day. In the evening, the body of an Arab orange grower was found in Jaffa. On the evening of the 5th, two bombs exploded simultaneously in the neighbouring gardens of the houses occupied by the Chief Justice and the District Commissioner. They appeared to have been planted. No casualties resulted, however, and the only damage was a broken window in Mr. Keith-Roach's residence.

30. On the night of the 6/7th an Arab was shot dead in a village near Acre and a Royal Irish Fusilier was killed when a military patrol on the frontier road was sniped. The next day the body of a Jew, who had been stabbed to death, was found on the seashore at Jaffa. On the 9th, a Jewish quarry labourer was seriously wounded, when rebels fired at workers near Petah Tiqva; an Arab police constable was murdered by two Arabs who fired at him as he was sitting in a café in a Haifa suburb and a Jewish carter was killed in the town; an Arab and a Jew were wounded near and in Jerusalem; and a private of the Royal Scots was killed by a bomb explosion in Samaria.

31. A Jewess was killed and two Jews were wounded on the morning of the 10th, when shots were fired at a bus in Haifa; in the afternoon three armed Arabs fired at two Jewish constables who were on duty in the centre of Haifa, one of them being killed and the other wounded; later, one of the assailants was arrested. On the same day a sheikh and his mother were wounded by armed men in a village near Zichron Ya'acov. An Arab was slightly wounded in Jaffa on the 11th, his assailant being arrested. On the 12th an Arab in a village in the Hulch was shot dead by an armed gang, and on the 13th Arabs were killed in Haifa, Acre and near Jaffa. On the same day incendiaries set fire to an Arab's tobacco warehouse in Haifa and very considerable damage was done.

32. While armed gangs were notable by their absence during the first fortnight of January, as already reported, there were five minor encounters and one major drive in the Samarian foothills between Hadera and Affule. On the 2nd a party of troops raided a village near Nablus during the night and surprised a small band. Two were killed, including a minor leader, and three were wounded. On the 4th, a detachment of the 2nd battalion the West Yorkshire Regiment fought an engagement with about 20 armed men in the Wadi Haramiya between Ramallah and Nablus. On the 6th the same detachment, later reinforced by troops of the same regiment from Ramallah, located and engaged a gang in the hills west of the Ramallah-Nablus road.

33. On the 12th, aircraft flying over a village between Nablus and Tulkarm observed a small band in uniform. Air action was taken against them and the 1st battalion the Green Howards at Nablus were informed and directed to the scene of the encounter. They recovered the bodies of two men, together with arms and ammunition. On the same day, a ration convoy engaged a gang near the Inn of the Good Samaritan on the Jerusalem-Jericho road and it is believed that three casualties were inflicted by aircraft which were summoned to the scene.

34. The major operation to which reference has been made was a two-days' drive from Hadera, starting on the 4th January and carried out by the Royals with Royal Air Force co-operation. A gang was encountered and four of the gangsters were killed. Ten were taken prisoner, three of whom were wounded. Thirteen rifles and 13 bandoliers of ammunition were captured and during the drive 12 villages were searched.

35. The only police action of special importance during the first half of January was the re-establishment of a police post in the Haram esh Sharif, composed of four Arab constables with a British sergeant, supported by a British constable, in command. The permanent stationing of British personnel in that area was an innovation, and one which was resented by the sheikhs of the Mosque, who threatened to resign, and by the more fanatical elements in the Old City of Jerusalem. It was even rumoured that the Moslem committee in Jerusalem were going to hand over the keys of the Haram to the Egyptian and Iraqi consuls with the request that they should protect that area and that, if these consuls failed to get the British police removed, the help of the German and Italian representatives would be invoked. Nothing of this sort happened, but on the following day the Arab shopkeepers were forced by intimidation to close their premises. The strike was over after two days and there were no untoward incidents.

36. During the latter part of January, there was a marked increase in crime and armed gangs in the hills became more active.

On the 15th two Arabs shot and fatally wounded an Arab employee of the Health Department near the central police station at Haifa; and a Jewish watchman was killed when shots were fired at a frontier settlement. There were several major incidents on the 16th. Early that morning, a gang of about twenty Arabs attacked three Jewish watchmen who were patrolling the woods on horseback near Ben Shemen settlement east of Lydda. The watchmen pluckily engaged the gang and killed one of the armed Arabs but two of them in their turn were shot dead. Police dogs were at once sent to the scene but the scent failed. The same morning a Yemenite Jew was fatally wounded in Jerusalem; in the afternoon an Arab police constable was killed, while sitting in a café in Acre and the body of an Arab who had been shot was found near Kafr Kana (Cana of Galilee). That night an Arab school teacher was shot dead in a frontier village.

37. On the 17th, an assassination and attempt occurred in Haifa within ten minutes of each other at nine o'clock in the morning. In the first incident a Jew was stabbed to death near an exclusively Jewish suburb; in the second an Arab sanitary surveyor was shot and critically wounded near the centre of the town. On the same day the body of an Arab was found on the Jaffa sea-shore and an attempt, which fortunately failed, was made on the lives of four British constables who were searching the Arab bank. In the evening a party of police travelling in a tender from Acre to Safad were sniped and a British constable was fatally wounded. The major incident of the 18th was once again in Haifa, an Arab being killed and another wounded while sitting in a café. The body of an Arab who had been killed by bandits was also found that day near Qalqilya.

38. The most noteworthy incident of the 19th was an affray between Jews and Arabs on Qusqus Tabun lands in the Haifa sub-district. Six Jews and three Arabs were injured. It arose as a result of a long-standing land dispute and deserves some mention, because it exemplifies the Jewish tendency to fish in troubled waters. The Jews some time ago bought land in the neighbourhood of Qusqus Tabun. They established a settlement on the plain and farm the neighbouring land. They also purchased about 3,000 dunums on a hill near by but have not yet taken possession of this estate, since they have not come to terms with the Bedu squatters under the Protection of Cultivators Ordinance. The position therefore is that the land is theirs, but until they have compensated the Beduin either by a cash payment or by allocating to the squatters a portion of this estate, they may not evict them. This is clearly understood by the Jews and also of course by the Arabs. Taking advantage, however, of an increase in the number of additional police posted to their settlement, the Jews cleared and cultivated small patches in the hill country, taking care that they should be athwart the tracks used by the Beduin. They were within their rights for in so doing they had not evicted the squatters. What was to be expected, however, happened: the Bedu cattle walked over these clearings in the hills. The Jews, with their ghaffirs, forthwith drove them away and the affray occurred.

39. On the 20th a private of the Buffs was killed and two soldiers of the same regiment and a sapper were wounded when a land mine exploded under a military trolley piloting a train near Ramle. An Arab girl was shot and wounded on the Jaffa-Tel Aviv boundary, possibly but not by any means certainly by Jews. Two Arabs, both of the Defence Party, were shot and seriously wounded by an Arab also in Jaffa. In the evening two bombs exploded in Nazareth Street, Haifa, and one Jew was killed and five were seriously injured; two Jewish additional police thereupon opened fire at a group of Arabs in the vicinity and wounded five of them. That night an Arab railway employee was stabbed and seriously wounded when he tried to stop four armed men who stole money and equipment from Kfar Yehoshua station.

The most noteworthy crime on the 21st was the killing of a Jewish taxi driver south of Lake Tiberias, when his car was ambushed at midday; the three other passengers were unhit. Trans-Jordan Frontier Force pursued the attackers with the permission of the Syrian authorities into Syria, but failed to make contact.

40. On the 22nd, the first of a series of assassinations occurred in Jerusalem when a well known and respected Sephardic Jewish cloth merchant was killed by an Arab outside his shop. On the same day an Arab gatekeeper of the Haram esh Sharif was shot and seriously wounded, an Arab being arrested later in connection with the crime. Other incidents were the killing and wounding of two Jewish employees of the Shell Company in Tiberias and the deaths of two Arabs and the wounding of a third at Jaffa and near Qalqilya respectively.

On the 23rd an attempt was made in Jerusalem against a member of the Nashashibi family and a 24 hours' curfew was imposed on the Arab quarter where it occurred. The body of an Arab who had been shot by bandits was also found near Tulkarm. The next day two Arabs, who may have been assisted by an Arab student at a Government school, shot and killed a Jewish taxi driver who was waiting outside the house of the ex-president of the Hebrew university in Jerusalem.

41. The major incidents of the 25th January were the killing of an Arab merchant in the Nazareth suq and an Arab near Ramle; and the wounding of an Arab police sergeant in Jaffa. In connection with this second incident it is worthy of remark that two Arab constables who were near the scene of the attack failed to stop the assassins or even to help the wounded men; both of them were placed under arrest. Two Jewish additional police were also wounded that night during an encounter with a gang near Hedera.

After one day's respite, two more attempted murders took place in Jerusalem on the 26th. A Jew was wounded in the morning near the Old City and an Arab in the afternoon inside it. On that day also three Arabs, who had been shot dead, were found at the bottom of a well in a village in Samaria, while in Nablus an assassin got his deserts when two Arabs who were fired on replied and wounded him. The assailant was an emissary of the gangs, who went to Nablus to take action against individuals who had refused to pay money to their funds.

42. On the 27th three Arabs were injured by a bomb explosion in a village near Jenin; it is thought that they were manufacturing a land mine. That night, a Jewish settler was abducted from a settlement near Haifa by an Arab gang.

On the 28th, the body of a Beersheba sheikh was found bludgeoned to death in the cellar of a house in Jaffa. The same evening in Jerusalem, a bomb exploded outside a Jewish-owned cinema. Fortunately, most of the Saturday night crowd were already inside the building, but a British soldier and six Jews, two of whom were women, were injured.

The major incident of the 29th January once again took place in the vicinity of Jerusalem, two Arabs holding up a 'bus on the outskirts and killing a Christian Arab woman and wounding another. On the same day an Arab blew himself up with a bomb which he was about to place on the railway line near Lydda and three Arabs were wounded in Tulkarm by four armed men. The licence of the times was exemplified by the killing of an Arab woman, probably a prostitute, in a Jaffa hotel.

43. The troops were more active during the latter part of January owing to the presence of more armed gangs. There were ten minor encounters and a major operation, consisting of a drive in the Nablus-Tulkarm-Azzun triangle. On the night of the 14th January a detachment of the 1st battalion the Border Regiment, with police, raided a house in a village near Jenin and killed two of its occupants one of whom was the local gang sub leader. A British police sergeant was wounded during the encounter. On the same night, a detachment of the 2nd battalion the Black Watch laid an ambush at a ford over the Jordan and surprised a gang of smugglers of contraband. During the ensuing engagement, one of the smugglers was killed, two were wounded and ten were taken prisoner.

44. On the 16th the Black Watch again took action at Wadi Fara, east of Jerusalem, killing one member of a gang. An officer was slightly wounded. On the same day a platoon of the 2nd battalion the Royal Irish Fusiliers engaged a band which had attacked a Jewish settlement near the Lebanese frontier inflicting two casualties on the bandits before they withdrew. On the next day troops of the same regiment dispersed a gang which attacked them near Safad and inflicted three casualties. An escort party of the 2nd battalion the King's Own encountered an armed band estimated at fifty strong on the 18th near the Jerusalem-Lydda railway line. They engaged and dispersed them, inflicting five casualties.

45. On the 19th January, acting on information that an armed gang had stolen a herd of cattle from a village south of Jenin, aircraft in co-operation with columns of the 2nd battalion the Leicestershire Regiment and the 1st battalion the Border Regiment went in search of it. The gang had dispersed by the time they came to the scene of the robbery, but during a subsequent search of the area three armed men who were hiding in a cave were killed. Five rifles, 3 grenades, a land mine and a quantity of ammunition and gelignite were found in the vicinity.

On the 23rd a detachment of the 2nd battalion the West Yorks and artillery returning from a search of a village near Ramallah were heavily sniped. They called for aircraft and one casualty was inflicted on the gang, which retreated. On the night of the 24/25th January a patrol of the 2nd battalion the Royal Irish Fusiliers took action against a small gang near the Crusader castle of Montfort on the Lebanese frontier. Casualties were inflicted and two firearms were captured. Finally, on the evening of the 28th a party of police engaged three armed Arabs on the banks of the river Yarkon near Petah Tiqva. Two of the Arabs were killed or drowned and the other was wounded.

46. The major operation referred to was carried out by troops of the 14th Infantry Brigade stationed at Nablus, assisted by the Royals and the Scots Greys, on the 23rd and 24th January. While the Greys, Royals, 11th Hussars and Royal Horse Artillery cordoned the roads north and south of the Nablus-Tulkarm-Azzun triangle, six columns of infantry assisted by the Royal Air Force carried out a drive from east to west of the area. An armed gang was encountered near Azzun and a gangster "sergeant" was killed. Twenty-two villages were checked and searched during the operation and seven firearms were captured. The charger of the gang leader, Aref Abdul Razzak, was captured and he only narrowly escaped with his life.

47. Apart from the action near the Yarkon already mentioned, the main police incident during the latter half of January was the finding of a small arsenal on the 18th in some lavatories belonging to the Waqf just outside the Haram esh Sharif. The arsenal contained nine pistols, six bombs, sixteen kilograms of gunpowder and numerous articles necessary for the manufacture of land mines including detonators, gelignite, an empty 18-pounder shell, fuse wire and electric cable. The gatekeeper of the door into the Haram nearby was arrested in connection with this discovery.

The police found a similar factory on the 20th in a blacksmith's shop in Ramle, though in this place the smith seemed rather to specialize in repairing rifles, revolvers and automatics. He was arrested.

48. During the last days of the period under review, namely 30th January to 6th February, the centre of terrorism shifted from Jerusalem to Haifa, while a state of insecurity prevailed as usual in Jaffa. Armed gangs continued to be fairly active in the hills.

On the 30th January the Haifa-Samakh passenger train was derailed near Beisan, the driver and fireman being injured; and a British constable was slightly wounded, when the Nur esh Shems prison was sniped. Incidents began in Haifa on the 31st when two armed men, after holding up the staff on pay day, stole LP.400 from the Public Health Department offices in the morning; while in the afternoon an Egyptian was shot and wounded in the centre of the town. On the evening of the same day an Arab was seriously wounded by an Arab in a neighbouring village. On the 1st February a Jewish pedlar was shot dead at 10 a.m. in one of the best residential quarters of Jerusalem, which is largely patronized by the Consular Corps; and the body of an Arab who had been shot by bandits was found near a village in Samaria. In Haifa an attempt made by two Arabs on the lives of two Jewish constables who were on duty near the law courts fortunately failed, though one policeman was wounded; on this occasion, one of the assailants was arrested. That night an Arab was killed in Acre.

49. The bodies of four Arabs, who had been killed by terrorists, were found on the 2nd, one near Ramle and three near Nazareth. An Arab was also wounded in Safad. The only other incident of note occurring on that day was an attempt on the life of a newspaper boy who was delivering the "Palestine Post" in the Qatamon quarter of Jerusalem where many British residents live. He was not hit.

On the 3rd an English tourist, Mr. Hugh Bingham, who is connected with the Peace Army and Boys' Clubs was shot and very seriously wounded in an Arab quarter of Jerusalem. It is believed that his assailant was an Arab who suspected Mr. Bingham of being a spy, since he had mingled freely with both Arabs and Jews in an endeavour to reconcile them. He is, at the time of writing, still not out of danger. On the same day an Egyptian was fatally wounded, while sitting in a café in Jaffa.

50. Several incidents occurred on the evening of the 4th. In Jerusalem a bomb exploded in one of the busiest streets of the Jewish section near the Jewish Agency offices and three passers by, all Jews, were injured; in Jericho an Arab clerk in the municipal offices was shot dead; during an attack on a settlement near Haifa, a Jew was slightly wounded, and a car in which an Englishman was travelling was sniped while ascending the hill from Haifa to Mount Carmel, but he was not hit.

51. On the night of the 5th a Jewish road worker was wounded during an attack on a Frontier settlement. On the 6th an Arab labourer was seriously wounded in Safad at noon; and in the evening two incidents occurred in Haifa. In the first Mr. Young, the Chief Accountant of the Palestine Railways, was slightly wounded when two Arabs fired at him when he was walking with his family in the town. Forty minutes later shots were fired at a Jewish 'bus and an advocate was killed while a constable and two Jewesses were wounded. On the same day a mixed goods and passenger train was derailed by sabotage near Rehovot, in consequence of which the Military Commander of the Southern District invoked a sanction which he had threatened on the 4th and prohibited all Arab commercial road traffic from entering or leaving Jaffa till the line was repaired. Actually, the trains were running again within 24 hours of the derailment so that the traffic was only held up overnight. Also on the 6th in Jerusalem the Arab shopkeepers were forced to close their premises as a protest against the Nashashibi delegates going to London.

52. There were a few minor encounters between Government forces and armed gangs during the period 30th January to 6th February. On the 31st January a patrol of the 2nd battalion, the West Yorks fought an action near Ramallah and killed one of the gang and wounded two others. Near the scene of the action the troops found a large dump of over 3,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, much of which was of modern Turkish manufacture. It is believed that the source of such ammunition is the Kurds on the Syro-Turkish frontier. On the 1st February while a village near Nablus was being cordoned and searched a plane made a forced landing and the pilot officer was killed. While detachments of the 2nd battalion the Leicestershire Regiment were cordoning a village north of Nablus on the evening of the 2nd, preparatory to a search, they were fired on and two privates were fatally wounded and a third slightly. On searching the village the next day, the troops found 4 rifles, 3 pistols, 2 grenades, 2 land mines and over 700 rounds of ammunition and detained 18 Arabs for interrogation, including a man dressed as a woman.

53. On the 3rd a Royal Air Force machine crashed in making a forced landing south of Bethlehem and the pilot, a Squadron Leader, was killed. On the night of the 5th, a detachment of the 1st battalion the Border Regiment, assisted by police, went to a village south of Jenin. They were fired on from a house and replied, killing two armed men. Some arms and ammunition were also seized.

Apart from these engagements the usual searches of villages and of quarters of towns continued.

I have, &c.,

HAROLD MACMICHAEL

High Commissioner for Palestine.

No. 2

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

TO

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Received 30th March, 1939.)

(SECRET)

Jerusalem, 24th March, 1939.

Sir,

In my last narrative despatch*, I reported events up to the 6th February, 1939. In this despatch I record occurrences from the 7th February to the 9th March.

2. As regards local Arab politics, the period was relatively uneventful because the centre of activity had shifted to London; and it may be said that after the 9th February, when Ragheb Bey Nashashibi and Yacoub Eff. Farraj joined the Palestine Arab delegation in England, there were temporarily no party divisions in the Arab ranks. The Arabic Press has for the moment ceased to revile the Defence Party and Fakhri Bey Nashashibi. It has concentrated instead on bitter attacks on the Jews and on publishing full and often over optimistic reports of the course of the London discussions. In the face of virtual unanimity among the parties and the favourable course, so far as reports reached them, of the conferences, the Arabic newspapers now consider it almost superfluous to praise the Mufti except for occasional naive comments such as "the last word must however remain with Haj Amin" and articles comparing the Mufti with Mr. Chamberlain and Herr Hitler, to the advantage of the first named.

3. The Arabs were soon given an opportunity of inveighing against the insidious plots of "Communist International Jewry" by the discovery by police on the night of the 5th/6th of 17 Jewish illegal immigrants on board the Greek ship "Artemisia" off the shores of Palestine. The vessel was impounded at Haifa and the Jews were arrested, but it is supposed that 50 or 60 of the immigrants had landed and disappeared into the settlements before the police arrived on the scene. The Arabic Press seized on this instance of illegal immigration to deliver long diatribes on its prevalence and the carelessness of the Government in not preventing it. Throughout the rest of the month the Arab papers have aimed their shafts at the Jews and the United States Government, which they believe supports them.

4. I have referred briefly in previous despatches to the growth of anti-American sentiment among the Arabs, but something further may be said in this connection. Ever since President Roosevelt's pronouncement in December about Palestine and the National Home, which elicited a rejoinder from Ibn Saud, the

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* No. 1

Palestine Arabs have been incensed towards the United States. They allege that that country, being a plutocracy, is completely under the influence of the Jews. Towards the end of February, in proportion as the Zionists began to look more and more to the United States to help their case in London, the Arabs have come to regard America as their enemy. No overt acts of aggression against American institutions have been committed, but the feeling against the United States is now strong. This serves as a useful illustration of the political innocence of the Arab masses whose likes and dislikes are dictated by purely ephemeral factors; it need not be taken seriously, any more than the anti-British feeling which, as will be shewn, was changed almost overnight at one time.

5. Whatever the Arab ignorance of world politics may be, the period has shewn that Palestine cannot remain unaffected by events in Syria. The fall of the Mardam Cabinet and the broadcasts from a secret revolutionary station, which issued a call to arms against France, at once caused the rebellious elements among the Arabs of Palestine to fear for the organisers of their insurrection in Syria, and to hope for the outbreak of a "jihad" all through the Near East. Other Arabs watched the course of events with some misgivings, realizing that a rebellion in Syria might hamper the Arab delegations at the London discussions.

6. Comment on the discussions, which are closely followed by the Arabs, has not been constructive and has merely elicited the known facts that they hope and expect that Palestine will eventually be independent, with a Jewish minority. The importance of the constitutional issue to the Arabs is exemplified by the spontaneous demonstrations which took place in all the major Arab towns of Palestine on the evening of the 26th February. These were occasioned by a report in "Al Ahram" of that day that Palestine would become independent and that a treaty would be concluded with Great Britain on the lines of the Anglo-Iraq Treaty. Attempts were made to carry British policemen shoulder high; Mr. Chamberlain and Haj Amin were cheered; and crowds of small boys shouted that the Arabs had got their freedom. In some villages in Samaria bonfires were lit. In the Nazareth area villagers declared a general holiday of one day and emissaries from the headquarters of the brigand "generalissimo" toured the district instructing a temporary cessation of terrorism. It is of interest to record that the intelligentsia, who naturally examine the question of the ultimate status of the country more closely than the masses, predict complete independence untrammeled by other Near Eastern ties.

7. The pan-Arab ideals of Nuri Pasha es Said are disliked, particularly in Trans-Jordan, while the alleged pretensions of the Saudi Arabian and Egyptian dynasties to provide a King for Palestine are disapproved of. Undeterred by the spectacle of the disintegration of the Etats du Levant into six or seven principalities, and the Turkish bogey in the north, the local Arab constitution mongers want a republic with the Mufti as the first President.

What the fellah wants is a severe restriction of immigration and land sales and some safeguard to prevent the Jews from ever securing a political or economic mastery over him.

8. Towards the end of the period the visit of Amin Osman Pasha of the Egyptian Ministry of Finance to Beirut caused considerable interest in Arab circles. It was generally known, in spite of an official denial by the Egyptian Government, that he had gone there to interview the Mufti in order to persuade him somewhat to modify his demands. It is not supposed that he had much success. The best local Arab opinion considers that the delegations to the London conference missed a golden opportunity on 20th February, when it was reported that the Jews had broken off the talks. It is suggested that the Arab delegations should have seized that moment to close with the British proposals and that from that time on their case has not gone so well.

The publication of the MacMahon letters* aroused little comment. Reuter's report on this correspondence, which was a model of bathos, reflected the general local view. In effect the only result was that the British and Arabs continued to put different interpretations on the phrases in the vital letter from Sir Henry MacMahon to the Sherif Hussein; and it was felt that the Arabs had made a tactical blunder in insisting on their publication when they should have devoted their energies to more vital issues.

* See Cmd. 5974

9. For the Jews the period has been a time of feverish activity and at such a juncture it is inevitable that many extravagant statements should have been made. Believing as they do that His Majesty's Government is about to jettison the ideal of the National Home largely because of the strategic necessity to Great Britain of Arab friendship and alliances in the Near East, a great deal of argument has been directed to showing the usefulness to Great Britain of a loyal, industrious and progressive ally, namely the Zionists, in this part of the world. The visit of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to Palestine from the 9th to the 12th February aroused comment and speculation. The Jews alleged that they were confident that Lord Gort's report to the Cabinet would stress the importance to British interests of a Zionist Dominion in Palestine. The Arabs were equally sure that he would discount any possibility of help from the "fickle and cowardly" Jews, but would deduce rather that the permanent retention of a tenth part of the British Army in Palestine was a contingency to be avoided at almost any cost. It is of interest to note that during the course of this debate and while the Jews feared more and more a political solution at their expense, it was hinted that Britain was making a great mistake in imagining that Zionism would inevitably side with her in an emergency against Germany or Italy. Such comment, however, is neither general nor responsible.

10. Apart from the strategic issue, Jewish opinion concentrated on every other aspect of the London talks. I wrote in my last despatch that the Jews as a whole were convinced before the conferences started that they would be a "second Munich", with His Majesty's Government capitulating before terrorism. During February it seemed to them that the reports reaching this country day by day confirmed their forebodings. Occasionally, a note of warning was sounded in the more reputable papers urging the people to take due account of the inevitable shifts and false starts of long and intricate discussions, but on the whole Palestine Jewry indulged in an orgy of self pity.

Straws in the wind at the start of the talks seemed to them to show the trend of events. The Arab delegations were fêted and resided in the smartest hotels, while the Jewish representatives lived more simply and were received with courtesy rather than ostentation. Society ladies, according to the newspapers, affected the new fashion of the keffiyeh and found the sheikhs of the East fascinating while the Jews were merely ordinary and so boring. Sensitive as they are in such matters, some local Jews reputedly sensed a change in the attitude of local British residents towards them.

11. In regard to points arising out of the discussions themselves, the Hebrew Press was able to demolish Jamal Husseini's arguments in his opening speech that Palestine was already over populated and that the immigration and land laws favoured the Jews. It was pointed out that Zionism had succeeded in making many portions of the country, notably the coastal plain region, fertile where it had been desert before and so had increased the economic absorptive capacity of Palestine. It was further stated that this process could continue in the future. Mention was also made of the great increase of the Arab population since the war. In this latter connection it is pertinent to remark that the Jewish apologists rarely take account of the important fact that in Turkish times many Arab young men were taken away each year for military service and that few of them returned. It was also observed that the land laws, and, in particular, the Protection of Cultivators Ordinance, were more favourable to the Arabs than to the Jews.

12. Dr. Weizmann's speech was praised for its moderation; and local Jewish opinion particularly endorsed his remark that they did not want to dominate the Arabs, but would not allow themselves to be dominated by them or submit to the same fate as the Assyrians in Iraq. Dr. Weizmann, it was said, underlined the basic factor of the discussions, which was that the Jews were fighting for the maintenance of the "status quo", viz., the implementation of the Mandate and the Balfour Declaration, while the Arabs were attempting to revise or annul those documents.

The Jews were especially incensed at your question, as reported, whether it was right to use armed force for the maintenance of the National Home: they argued, as usual, that force on such a scale would never have been necessary if force had been sooner and more consistently applied.

13. During the period 8th to 22nd February, the reports made more and more gloomy reading for the Jews. On the 22nd it was stated that the Jewish delegations had withdrawn from the discussions. The local reaction to that erroneous message was generally one of relief. When it was discovered that only the Mizrahi (Orthodox) Jews had seceded, many ordinary people thought that they were right and the others

were wrong. Such persons were fortified in their convictions by the messages during the last week of February to the effect that the Mandate would be terminated within as short a period as five years, after which the country would be independent with an Arab majority. Jews of whatever political shade felt that such an eventuality would spell the end of the National Home more surely than the most drastic limitation of immigration. As a minority in an Arab state, without the sovereignty of an impartial power like Great Britain, they believed that even the Jews then in Palestine would gradually be deprived of all their rights, while it was certain that no more immigrants would be allowed. Believing this as they did and with their bitter experiences as minorities in other lands to support their belief, they were no longer interested in the quid pro quo which they believed had been offered, namely, immigration at the rate of 10,000 a year during the period of transition and the lifting of the ban on the 10,000 German Jewish children. Whereas it had been generally held before the discussions started that the crucial point, so far as the Jews were concerned, would be immigration, it was now clear that this had receded into the background before the constitutional issue. Mr. Ben Gurion's manifesto on the 26th February to the Jews of Palestine struck a responsive note in all their hearts.

14. On the morning of the 27th February a series of bomb outrages occurred almost simultaneously throughout the country. As the result, 38 Arabs were killed or fatally wounded and 44 were injured. Details will be given later in this despatch. It is likely that they were the work of Jews and it has been stated that young men in the Right wing of Zionism as well as Revisionists were implicated. It is not inconceivable that these outrages were designed as a reply and a protest to what was believed to be His Majesty's Government's policy. So much is mere conjecture, but what is certain is that the Jews of Palestine in the days succeeding the fatal 27th exhibited a unity and a singleness of purpose which they have never shewn before. At a full meeting of the Vaad Leumi (General Council of Palestine Jews) on the 28th, "moderates" like Dr. Katznelson spoke in the militant and uncompromising tones previously used only by the followers of Jabotinsky. Similarly, the Labour daily 'Davar' expressed views which, only a month before, would have been labelled Revisionist. The "Palestine Post" devoted a leader on the 2nd March to the anniversary of the death of Joseph Trumpeldor, the Revisionist hero comparable with Horst Wessel. The practical results of the Vaad Leumi meeting were also illuminating. Resolutions were passed authorizing the Executive to call a general strike, to include all shades of political opinion, to make a register of Jewry for an "emergency" and to expedite the collection of money for the defence fund.

15. Having regard to this solidarity, it may be said that the remark in my last despatch that a decision which was in their opinion excessively detrimental to Zionism would drive Zionists into the Revisionist camp, was not an over-statement. What would probably occur would be the fusion of Revisionism and Zionism and the Jews would be divided merely into active and passive sections. The activists would no doubt continue and enlarge the scope of terrorist acts, directed primarily against the Arabs and secondarily against the British: the passive element would resort to the weapon of a general strike. While such a contingency is perhaps somewhat remote, it cannot be wholly disregarded. The situation of the Government would then be reversed, with the Arabs on its side and the Jews against it, an adversary better equipped and having more ingenuity than the Arabs. It has been argued that the Jews have much more to lose by such a campaign, for if they forfeited the friendship of Great Britain, their refugees from other lands would find no home in England or in Palestine under the Mandate; their outlying settlements would have to fend for themselves without the help of British bayonets; and legislation might perhaps prevent or render difficult the inflow of capital from abroad which is so necessary to the National Home. In spite of these factors, however, it has been said that the Jews in Palestine would fight for their existence as they saw it in this country and that they would disregard the fate of their fellow Jews elsewhere. In spite of their religion, their history and their temperament, the question whether or not the Jews in the last resort would fight with arms as well as words is one of the questions of the hour at the time of writing.

16. The relations of the Government with the Arabs have improved during the period and the Government's authority over the country has increased. Apart from these trends, however, the fear and bitterness between Arab and Jew are possibly more marked than they have ever been. It is these feelings, resulting from years of assassination and reprisal, the feuds which have been engendered among the Arabs and the licence of the times, which keep Palestine in a state of unrest.

A sure sign of a government's authority is its ability to collect taxes. There has recently been considerable improvement in this respect. In the rural district of Haifa, for instance, tax receipts during the second fortnight of February were almost double those of the first fortnight. Similarly, collections in the Nablus, Jenin and Tulkarm districts for February, 1939, are four or five times better than in February, 1938.

17. Another example of the slight increase in the Government's prestige is the fact that two cases of non-political murder were reported by Arab villagers to the Nablus police. A third instance is the fact that 90,000 adult male Arabs have now taken out the voluntary identity cards which were at one time under a rebel ban. In Samaria, a purely Arab district, identity cards have been issued to over 17,000 persons out of a total estimated adult male population of 38,000.

18. Government's improved relations with the Arabs are also exemplified in a variety of ways. Firstly, in the Gaza-Beersheba division the administration reports that Arabs from as far away as Hebron are thronging to be enrolled among the labourers on the Gaza-Beersheba road: only two months ago such labourers would have been picketted. In the same area the re-established tribal court is as much frequented by the Beduin as before and the re-opened school is working normally. In the Galilee and Acre District, also, Arabs are now pressing Government to provide them with work after refusing to work on Government undertakings for months past.

19. There has been an increase in the number of arms and in the amount of ammunition captured recently. During the fortnight 11th to 24th February, 30 rifles, 2,100 rounds of ammunition, 11 shotguns and 14 pistols and revolvers were captured. On one day, the 27th February, the troops in separate operations captured 14 rifles, a pistol, 29 grenades and over 7,500 rounds of ammunition. It is worthy of note that a gang of 30 to 40 men, after losing some 14 men in action, fled incontinently making no attempt to recover the rifles of the dead. This is in contrast to the attitude of the bandits in previous encounters, where extraordinary risks have been taken to prevent the capture of arms by the troops.

20. The dissensions in the ranks of the bandits, which have previously been noted, have somewhat increased. The "commander-in-chief", Abdul Rahim Haj Mohammed, has now been in Damascus for nearly two months wrangling with the committee there about pay and the manner in which the campaign is being conducted. It has been rumoured that he has recently married and is living in Aleppo; at least he shows no sign of willingness to return to Palestine. Another leader, Abu Dorreh, has returned to Jenin after recovering from a wound in Syria. He has made himself unpopular with the villagers. The activities of the other main leader, Aref Abdul Razzak, have also been considerably circumscribed.

Demands for money are now paid somewhat reluctantly. Certain Christians at Nazareth are said to have petitioned the Mufti about this, his reply being that naturally any contribution was purely voluntary.

21. The abundant late rains, which have fallen throughout the country during February and early March and are even more important than the early rains for the crops, are likely somewhat to offset the set-back to Arab agriculture occasioned by the disturbances. While only about half the land has been sown, it may be that the yields will be greater than those of last year. The rains have also been beneficial in drowning the field mice which threatened to destroy the crops. As regards citrus, nearly 2,000,000 more cases have been exported than during the corresponding period last year, though this increase in quantity of output has been counterbalanced by a recession in the prices offered. The net result, however, must be favourable to the growers, who have benefited from the war in Spain in this respect.

22. In the municipalities, rates and taxes are being collected more efficiently. As the result an estimated balance in hand of LP.10,000 is expected on 31st March at Haifa. Municipal commissions have recently been set up in Tulkarm and Tiberias. Jenin is being cleaned up and Ramle will, it is expected, end the year with a little money in hand. In this region the recent capture of a highway robber, formerly a professional burglar, has eased the situation.

23. An account of the incidents which occurred from the 7th February to the 9th March will now be given. The main incidents of the 7th February were three murders, namely a Jewish employee of the Palestine Electric Corporation near the southernmost Jewish settlement of Bir Tuvia when a car in which he was travelling was sniped from an Arab village; an Arab in Haifa; and a Jewish truck driver when a land mine placed on the Jaffa-Jerusalem road exploded under his lorry near Ramle. The last crime is of interest as it was the first time that a mine had been laid on this main thoroughfare. It coincided with an increased use of bombs for sabotage in this area, and resulted in notices being issued by the Military Commanders of the Jerusalem and Southern districts to the effect that the traffic of Arab owned vehicles and Arab passengers on the road would be prohibited or curtailed if further cases of damage occurred.

24. On the afternoon of the 8th an Arab shot and fatally wounded a member of the Husseini family in the Old City of Jerusalem, and a curfew was immediately imposed on that area; in the evening a Haifa suburban bus was sniped and three Jews were wounded. The only incident of note on the following day was the wounding of a Jewish bus passenger, also by sniping in Haifa.

On the 10th an Arab police sergeant was wounded by shots near the Government printing press, Jerusalem, and a police inspector of the Abdul Hadi family was wounded in Tulkarm. His clan, who are in any case working against the regular gangs, was much incensed at this attempt which served to increase its inclination to co-operate with Government in the Jenin area.

25. An Arab woman was killed on the 11th, while another woman and a youth, both Arabs, were wounded when a bomb exploded on a track near Jaffa; that evening another Jew was wounded when a bus was sniped in Haifa. During the night shots were fired through the window of a house in a settlement near Rehovot and the Jewish householder and his two children were wounded; a watchman who came to their assistance was shot dead. Police dogs which were sent to the scene lost the scent in a tumbledown collection of Arab huts near the settlement. No action could therefore be taken. It appears, however, that the evidence was good enough for certain other persons; for on the following night a mysterious car went through the "tin town" and 3 bombs were thrown from it as it passed. They exploded but no one was hit.

The main crimes of the 12th February were the wounding of a Jew when a bus travelling from Rehovot to Tel Aviv was sniped, the murder of a Jewish artisan on his way to work at the iron foundry in Acre and the wounding of a British constable while on duty in the Jaffa suq. As the result of this last crime, a 24 hours' curfew was imposed on the area.

26. On the 13th an Egyptian employed as a cook in the central prison was shot dead at Acre in the morning and that night a Jewess was shot and fatally wounded through the window of her house in a settlement near Haifa. It appears that Jews from this place took the law into their own hands as the result of the murder, went to a neighbouring Bedu encampment from which they believed that the assassin came, and killed two Arabs, one of them a woman.

The chief incidents of the 14th occurred in the Acre district. An Arab employee at the Government stud farm fired at two Jewish employees who were working in the stables, wounding them; he then made off to a neighbouring Arab village. A land mine which exploded under a military truck near Acre killed one Royal Ulster rifleman and wounded two others. Two villages adjacent to the scene of this crime were subsequently searched by troops. In one of them eight Arabs were killed and in the other about 50 houses were burnt down owing to the ignition of a quantity of gunpowder or similar material in a house which was being demolished.

27. On the 15th, a land mine exploded under a Jewish bus on a track near Rehovot and nine passengers were injured, including two women; another bomb exploded on the Haifa-Lydda railway line, derailing the engine and nine wagons of a goods train and injuring the Arab driver and fireman, the former fatally. That evening an Arab police constable was murdered in the Old City of Jerusalem, and a 24 hours' curfew was imposed; also a Jew was killed in a settlement near Haifa.

Sabotage to the railway continued unabated, a train on the Lydda-Tel Aviv line being delayed on the 16th and part of a goods train being derailed on the Jerusalem-Lydda line on the following day. The Military Commander of the Jerusalem district implemented a previous warning on the 17th February and

stopped all Arab commercial traffic from using the roads into or out of Jerusalem until the line was repaired. Traffic was thus held up for 13 hours.

28. During the period 7th to 17th February, the troops continued as usual to search Arab villages. Four major operations were carried out and there were five minor encounters. Of the major operations the most successful from the point of view of results was that of the 8th February when troops of the 18th Infantry Brigade and 24 aircraft carried out a drive of the area between Jerusalem and Ramallah. Twenty-two villages were searched and 2 bands were engaged and dispersed with heavy casualties. The 2nd battalion the Black Watch encountered a gang near Mukhmas and killed 4 of them, captured 2 and wounded several others. Aircraft and the 2nd battalion the West Yorkshires engaged another gang near Beit Duqqu and killed 7 of them, captured 3 and inflicted other casualties. It was in these encounters, as mentioned above, that the bandits lost their nerve and left their arms on the battle-field. Twenty-four rifles, 2 shot guns, a bomb and over 1,200 rounds of ammunition were seized.

29. The other operations were less fruitful but their effect in establishing Government control in the area combed was useful. On the 14th the Royals, the 2nd battalion the Royal Ulster Rifles and the 1st battalion the Hampshire Regiment, with Royal Air Force co-operation, searched five villages north of Zichron Ya'acov. Two rifles and a quantity of ammunition were seized. On the 16th, troops of the 14th, 18th and 19th Infantry Brigades conducted a drive through the Samarian foot hills between Ramallah and Nablus to the west of the Jerusalem-Nablus road. The 3rd battalion the Coldstream Guards, the 2nd battalion the Kings Own, the 2nd battalion the West Yorkshires, the 1st battalion the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, the 2nd battalion the Queens and detachments of the Worcestershire Regiment and the Black Watch took part. Twenty-eight villages were searched and 4 firearms, ammunition, gelignite and uniforms were captured. On the following day, troops of the 16th Infantry Brigade searched 7 villages between Haifa and Safad in the neighbourhood of Shefa Amr. Royal Air Force co-operated. The units concerned were the Royals, the Hampshire Regiment, the South Staffordshire Regiment, the Royal West Kents, the Royal Ulster Rifles and the Royal Irish Fusiliers. Four firearms, ammunition and uniforms were seized.

30. Encounters of special interest were the following. On the evening of the 10th February a detachment of the 1st battalion the Green Howards was heavily fired on when returning to Nablus along a track. Two soldiers were wounded in the first exchange, after which the attackers retreated. It is not known whether casualties were inflicted on the band. On the following day a reconnaissance party of the Royal Engineers was sniped while travelling along a track in the Samaria foot-hills north-west of Ramallah. They held off the attack until the arrival of aircraft and a party of the West Yorkshires, when the band retired after one of its members had been wounded, his rifle and bandolier of ammunition being recovered. Two bandits were killed on the 12th, when a gang attacked a car containing a British police inspector and some Jewish ghaffirs on the eastern shores of Lake Tiberias. A motorised patrol of the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force arrived on the scene and the attackers retreated. On the same day 3 casualties were inflicted on a band by the 2nd battalion the Royal Irish Fusiliers and police in an engagement which followed the sniping of Jewish police in Safad. During the encounter a Jewish constable was fatally wounded. On the 17th February, during an encounter between 4 armed men and a special night squad north of Lake Hulch, one of the gang was killed.

31. A series of assassinations and attempts began in Jerusalem on the 18th with the wounding of a Russian Christian and a Jew in Arab quarters outside the walls. Curfews were immediately imposed on the areas concerned. On the same day an Arab was wounded in Jaffa and an Arab police sergeant and an Arab villager were murdered in Haifa and near Nablus, respectively. Though unconnected with the disturbances, it may be mentioned that, also on the 18th, a police "pick up" met with an accident on the Jerusalem-Jaffa road near Jaffa which resulted in fatal injuries to 3 British policemen and 4 others were hurt. There have been other accidents of the kind before but to date none has taken such a heavy toll of life.

32. On the 20th February an Arab shot and wounded a Christian Arab in the new Jerusalem and an Arab shepherd boy was killed by the explosion of a land mine near a village in Samaria. The body of an Arab, who had been shot dead by bandits, was also found on the Nablus-Jerusalem road. Incidents in

the Haifa district on that day included the fatal wounding of an Arab by Jewish additional police when they observed him loitering near a settlement and he ran away; and the capture of an armed Arab who had been wounded during an attack on another Jewish settlement. Tents and equipment belonging to the Posts and Telegraphs Department and the Railways were burnt down at a station near Jerusalem on the Lydda line.

Further incidents occurred on the 21st throughout the country. In Haifa an Arab carter of the Mantacheff Oil Company was shot dead and a Jewish additional constable was wounded in two separate incidents. In Jaffa two Arabs were killed.

Near that town, in the evening, armed men shot and wounded an Arab in a village but the gang was beaten off by the other villagers after one brigand had been killed. In Jerusalem two Jewish constables were wounded during an attack on the municipal slaughter-house which they were guarding. That night armed men entered a village near Nablus and shot an Arab dead.

33. On the 22nd, an attempt was made on the life of a member of the Nashashibi family in Jerusalem, while he was taking his son to school. He was only slightly wounded. On the 24th, again in Jerusalem, an Arab shot and fatally wounded an orthodox Jew, and the body of an Arab who had been murdered was found on the Jaffa beach. Six Jewish passers-by were injured, on the evening of the 25th, when a bomb exploded in one of the main Jerusalem shopping centres. Four of the injured were women. The same night armed men entered a village near Hadera and shot and seriously wounded an Arab.

On the morning of the 26th, a bomb was thrown into a Jewish truck in Haifa and two of its occupants were killed; later in the day a third Jew was murdered also in Haifa, and a curfew was immediately imposed on the Arab quarter. In the evening the Lydda-Tel Aviv train was derailed by sabotage, and five Arabs including the driver and fireman were injured.

34. It will be noticed that, bad as this catalogue of crime is, incidents were, comparatively speaking, less frequent during the week preceding the 27th February than in any other week during the period under review. On that day, however, a series of bomb outrages occurred throughout the country, resulting in death or fatal injury to 38 Arabs and the wounding of 44 Arabs and 2 Jewish constables. The incidents all occurred in the morning between 6.30 a.m. and 9.30 a.m.: they followed closely on the demonstrations by Arabs to celebrate their "independence" on the previous day and the reports from London that the Jews were to be a perpetual minority in an Arab State. It is possible, in view of these circumstances coupled with the known fact that two murders of Arabs were committed that day by Jews, that the outrages were an organized "protest" by Jews against the possibility of the liquidation of the National Home. Who actually organised the crimes is, however, unknown. The Arabs profess to believe sincerely that the Jewish additional police were concerned and have continued to demand their disarmament; this theory has not been substantiated.

35. At 6.25 a.m. on the 27th a bomb exploded harmlessly near the law courts, Haifa, and a Jewish constable who was on duty near by fired at and slightly wounded an Arab, whom he suspected of having thrown the bomb. Five minutes later two mines exploded simultaneously, one in the booking hall of the eastern railway station and the other in the Arab market, the scene of the outrages last July. The bomb in the station did considerable material damage, but the booking clerk miraculously escaped unscathed and the only casualties were an Arab and a Jewish additional policeman. A second constable was wounded by shots fired at the same time by an unknown person. The bomb in the market killed or fatally injured 29 Arabs, including 6 women and 6 children, and wounded 32. Both these two bombs were fitted with time mechanism. There was of course considerable panic in Haifa, but an immediate curfew imposed on the area served to calm the situation. The curfew was lifted from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. during which time about 200 Arabs demonstrated in front of the German consulate, demanding that that they should be given redress. The consul did not see them and otherwise there was no further untoward incident in the town. On the next day however, when curfew was lifted, the Arabs proclaimed a 2 days' strike.

36. At 7 a.m. a bomb, which had apparently been placed in a vegetable basket, exploded in the Arab market in David street in the Old City of Jerusalem. Four Arabs were killed or fatally injured and 5 were wounded. At about the same time a Jew shot an Arab dead in a Jewish quarter of the new Jerusalem; and a quarter of an hour later a Jew fired several shots at an Arab bus as it was passing a Jewish quarter but fortunately no one was hit. At 8.30 a.m. an Arab truck was sniped when travelling through the good class Jewish quarter of Rehavia, but the vehicle was not hit.

37. Meanwhile, still further incidents were reported from Jaffa and Tel Aviv. At dawn the bodies of 2 Arabs and another Arab who had been wounded so severely that he died later were found near the Reading power station on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. At about the same time 2 Jewish youths murdered an Arab in a street in Jaffa and a land mine which exploded on a track near Ramle injured three Arabs. At 7 a.m. or thereabouts, three more land mines exploded in different localities. One went off on a railway crossing in Tel Aviv just after a passenger train had passed the spot; the second and third exploded on two tracks near Petah Tiqva and 2 Arabs were injured. In the same area an unexploded mine was found by police at 8.30 a.m. on another track and rendered harmless, and an unsuspecting sheep was blown up when it trod on a bomb concealed in another path. Finally, at 9.20 a.m., a loud explosion was heard near Sarona which is on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. Police who went to the scene found that 2 mines had gone off and a third unexploded mine near by was removed. No casualties resulted from these explosions.

Surprisingly enough, the crimes of the following days did not indicate that the Arabs were taking wholesale reprisals although Jews continued to be murdered in various localities. A timely discovery on the night of the 27th was that of a large infernal machine fitted with clock mechanism in the Old City of Jerusalem near the scene of that day's explosion. As the result of this a 24 hours' curfew was imposed on the Jewish quarter of the Old City.

38. A whole Jewish family residing in a settlement near Rehovot were murdered on the night of the 27th/28th by an armed band. A man, a woman and two children were the victims. On the morning of the 28th an Arab shot and wounded a Jew in new Jerusalem.

The main incidents of the 1st March were the murders of Arabs in a village near Lydda and in Nazareth and the wounding of another Arab in Jaffa. As the result of the last-mentioned crime the Military Commander of the Southern district ordered the closure of all cafés in Jaffa for four days. On that morning, too, the body of an unidentified Arab was found in a cave near Bethlehem. In the evening three armoured cars containing Nablus police who were returning from Jerusalem encountered 4 road blocks on the way home. While the constables were removing one of these blocks they were fired at and British constable Dowling was fatally wounded.

39. On the 2nd March, a bomb was thrown in the afternoon at workers in a match factory near Acre as they were returning in a truck to Haifa; 5 Jews including a woman were injured. In the evening two armed men went to some flour mills owned by an Arab near Jaffa, which incendiaries had tried to burn down a week before, and killed one of the Arab employees; they then went on to the house of the Christian Arab French vice-consul in Jaffa, who is a relative of the mill owner, and fired three shots at him but wounded his young son instead.

40. The chief crimes occuring on the 3rd were an attempt on the life of a Jew in the morning on a piece of waste land adjacent to the King David Hotel, Jerusalem. His assailant, an Arab youth, was not caught. A goods train was derailed on the Haifa-Lydda line in the afternoon, the Arab driver and fireman being slightly hurt. Police dogs followed the trail from the scene of this sabotage to two houses in Lydda whose owners were absent. The houses were demolished.

On the 4th a youth of 18 of the Nashashibi family was shot and wounded just outside one of the gates into the Old City of Jerusalem. It is thought that the Husseini faction believed that he was active in distributing Fakhri Nashashibi's broadsheets. He died later and an incident occured during his funeral on the following day. The Nashashibis who were following the bier stated that they saw an Arab with a pistol about to fire at them and so fired first, whereupon the man made off. No casualties resulted, but the Nashashibis were very incensed at this interruption of the obsequies.

41. On the 6th several crimes occurred. An Arab murdered an Arab in the Haifa suq at about 8.15 a.m. and half an hour later an Arab gunman entered an Arab's shop and demanded money for the rebel cause. The shopkeeper refused whereupon he was shot and fatally wounded, but a passing military patrol observed the terrorist making off and after an exchange of shots killed him. His revolver

and magazines of ammunition were recovered. Unfortunately, a Persian bystander was also shot dead during the firing. A Jew was wounded when a Jerusalem-Tel Aviv bus was sniped near Ramle. The Jewish medical officer in charge of the Safad Government hospital was shot and wounded when an Arab jumped on to the running-board of the ambulance in which he was travelling through the Arab quarter of the town. The condition of both these persons is, however, not serious. A fine of LP. 100 was imposed on the Arab quarter of Safad.

The chief incident of the 7th March was the finding of a Jew, who had been bludgeoned to death, on the outskirts of Jerusalem.

42. On the 8th an Arab post-office labourer and his wife, formerly a Jewess, were shot dead in Haifa, two Arabs were wounded by Arabs in separate incidents in Jaffa and two Jewish constables were killed and two wounded when a party of settlers whom they were escorting was sniped near Beisan. The band which had attacked them was dispersed on the arrival of the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force.

Another Jewish constable was killed on the night of the 8th/9th by the explosion of a Mills bomb in a Galilee settlement. The chief incidents of the 9th were the wounding of an Arab boy and a man in Jerusalem, as the result of a bomb exploding when boys threw stones at it; the injury of an Arab cab driver in Haifa, when a bomb was thrown at a delivery van and rebounded; the wounding of 2 Jews when a potash convoy was sniped on the Jerusalem-Jericho road in the afternoon; the murder of an Arab by Arabs in a village near Haifa; and the murder and attempted murder of Arabs by Jews in Tel Aviv and Jaffa respectively. As a result of these last crimes, the Military Commander of the Southern district ordered that Jewish motor traffic should not be permitted to leave Tel Aviv by the Haifa road on the following day till 3 p.m.

43. During the last ten days of February and the first days of March, the troops and police were more successful both in searches and in the arrest of wanted persons or would-be assassins than they have been for a long time past. Mention has already been made in this despatch of the record haul of arms and ammunition on 27th February, of the capture of the highway robber near Ramle and of the shooting of the gunman on 6th March in Haifa, directly after he had committed a murder. These spectacular successes were, however, matched by other lesser examples of the increased vigilance and good fortune of the security forces.

44. The following may be cited as successful searches. On the 21st February, detachments of the 1st battalion the South Staffordshire Regiment found in Hittin near Tiberias 2 rifles, a pistol and nearly 400 rounds of ammunition. On the 26th the 1st battalion the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment discovered 7 rifles, a revolver and 400 rounds of ammunition in caves near Ramle. On the 27th and 28th the 1st battalion the Border Regiment searched a village near Jenin and seized a pistol, 7,650 rounds of ammunition, 29 grenades, over 330 sticks of gelignite and a dentist's outfit complete with gas cylinder. Meanwhile, on the 27th the Scots Greys and the 2nd battalion the West Yorkshires during operations near Jerusalem captured 2 rifles, uniforms, saddles and a quantity of ammunition; and on the 28th the Royals and the 2nd battalion the Queens found 4 firearms, 245 rounds of ammunition and stolen Public Works Department's tools in the search of a village near Tulkarm.

During the search of a quarter of Jaffa on 3rd March, the 1st battalion the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers captured 3 firearms and nearly 300 rounds of ammunition; while on the two following days the 2nd battalion the Queens discovered in a village near Tulkarm 12 rifles, a shot gun, 2,200 rounds of assorted ammunition, 200 sticks of gelignite, 209 detonators, 20 lb. of dynamite, 59 water bottles, a telephone, gunpowder and a quantity of uniforms; on the 7th and 8th March the same unit captured, again near Tulkarm, 5 rifles, 500 rounds of ammunition, 2 revolvers, 8 grenades, a land mine and 10 verey lights.

45. As regards arrests of wanted or suspected persons, mention may be made of the action by police on the night of the 24th February when they arrested 4 Arabs out of the 6 who were implicated in murder in a village near Jaffa; the capture by troops of an Arab in possession of a loaded revolver, after he had fired a shot in new Jerusalem on the 9th; and the arrest by British police of 4 Arabs who were abducting a fifth in a gharry, on the 6th in Jaffa.

46. There were not many major operations or encounters with armed bands during the period 19th February to 9th March, but the following are noteworthy. On the evening of the 20th, shots were fired at a Jewish settlement on the Haifa-Jenin road and the police engaged and dispersed a band, wounding one gangster. On the 21st, a detachment of the 2nd battalion the Leicestershire Regiment was sniped when returning in the evening from operations in Samaria. They returned the fire and wounded one of their attackers, capturing 3 others. On the 22nd, major operations were carried out by the 14th and 18th Infantry Brigades, with Royal Air Force co-operation, in the Tulkarm area and along the Lydda-Jerusalem railway line respectively. A patrol of the 2nd battalion the Leicestershire Regiment killed an armed Arab during night operations in the Nablus hills on the 23rd. On the 26th, a detachment of the Northumberland Fusiliers encountered 3 armed men near Ramle and killed all of them, recovering their rifles and ammunition; another detachment of the same regiment engaged an armed band in the same vicinity on that day and inflicted casualties, five of whom were killed. Two fusiliers were killed and a third wounded during the encounter.

47. On the 27th February, a successful action took place in the north. That afternoon a patrol of the Royal Ulster Rifles observed a large armed and mounted band crossing the Acre-Safad road. They pursued them and were later joined by Royal Air Force and units from the Hampshire Regiment and the Royal Irish Fusiliers. In the ensuing engagement 19 of the band are known to have been killed, while many more must have been wounded. Twelve rifles, a pistol and 750 rounds of ammunition were captured.

On the 4th March another engagement occurred between troops of the Worcestershire Regiment and an armed band during the search of a village near Hebron. Two bandits were killed and a number wounded.

On the 5th, a land mine exploded on a track near a settlement on the northern frontier, a Jew being injured. At the same time an armed gang opened fire. A passing police patrol held them at bay until the arrival of Royal Air Force and Royal Irish Fusiliers, whereupon they retreated south. They were pursued and aircraft inflicted casualties, 6 bodies being recovered and one wounded bandit taken prisoner. Eight rifles and nearly 500 rounds of ammunition were captured.

48. Finally, an important search on the 7th was that of Acre by troops of the Hampshire Regiment, the Royal West Kent Regiment, the Royal Ulster Rifles and the Royal Irish Fusiliers, with the assistance of aircraft. Little was found however, and no shooting occurred.

I have, etc.,

HAROLD MACMICHAEL

High Commissioner for Palestine.

No. 3

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

to

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Received 27th July, 1939)

(SECRET)

Jerusalem. 21st July, 1939.

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to my despatch (Secret) of the 24th March 1939* which carried the narrative of events in this country up to the 9th March, 1939. This despatch will cover the period from the 10th March, 1939, to the 8th July, 1939.

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* No. 2

2. The political atmosphere in Palestine during the whole of the month of March was very sensitive to the progress of events connected with the closing scenes of the Arab and Jewish Conferences in London and, after their somewhat sudden end on the 16th and 17th March, to the ex Parte views ventilated by the local Presses of the two communities regarding what they were led to believe by copious press reports from London had been the terms offered jointly to the two delegations by the British Government.

3. At the end of February, Arabs in Palestine had enjoyed a short period of tense exhilaration as a result of unfounded reports that the British terms were tantamount to the creation, after a short period of transition, of an independent Palestine State with a permanent Jewish minority and drastically curtailed Jewish immigration. This spirit persisted despite your public statement that the reports in question were premature and exaggerated. Thus the somewhat abrupt ending of the Conference came as a severe disappointment especially among that large section of the Arab population whose exhibition of joy in February had been due as much to a feeling of relief that any settlement would mean an end of the rebellion with all its hardships as to satisfaction over the favourable terms which they imagined they had won.

4. The Jewish reaction had in it a certain measure of relief that an unpleasant ordeal was over, and those who had from the outset been hostile to the idea that a Jewish delegation should participate at all in proceedings which, in the minds of most local Jews, seemed to bode no good for the future of the Yishuv in Palestine, were openly relieved that Dr. Weizmann and his colleagues had after all been adamant and had not given, as they had feared they would, a further deplorable exhibition of that conciliatory weakness which had already done so much harm to Zionist aspirations. The publication of the news of the termination of the Conference was not, however, followed by any disturbances, although it was only at the last minute that a general Jewish strike ordered for the 20th March was called off as a result of an appeal for calm from the Agency leaders in London.

5. Throughout March public security conditions throughout the country improved to the extent that there were signs of the gradual reduction of banditry in the rural districts.

6. The end of the London talks, however, provoked a lengthy and somewhat bellicose manifesto from the former Arab Higher Committee, the tone of which sought to justify the attitude which the Arab delegates had taken in London, and at once steps were taken in the Lebanon and Syria to give new impetus to the waning revolt in Palestine. To give effect to this policy Abdul Rahim el Haj Mohamed, the so-called Commander-in-Chief of the rebels in Palestine, who had been for some time in voluntary retreat in Damascus as a result of differences of opinion with the rival gang-leader Aref Abdul Razzik, with whose tactics of violence and robbery he profoundly disagreed, was persuaded to return to his command in Samaria. He left Damascus on the 19th of March and on the 27th of the month he and his most important followers were surprised by a sudden raid of Sanur village in the Jenin sub-district by the 1st Battalion the Border Regiment. In the result Haj Mohamed was killed, and another well known gang-leader Suleiman Abu Khalifa was fatally wounded, and a third, Selim Said, wounded.

Haj Mohamed - a man of better reputation than any other gang-leader in Palestine - had for a long period commanded the respect of and exercised control over a large area in central Palestine, and his removal so quickly after his return was a severe setback to the anti-Government forces.

7. Meanwhile, however, terrorism and sabotage persisted. During the first three weeks of March - probably as a result of the bomb outrages in Haifa on the 27th February when twenty-eight Arabs had been killed and thirty-three wounded - there was a series of isolated attacks on Jews in which seven Jews were killed and one wounded; and simultaneously there was increased terrorist activity in the form of murders, attempted murders and abductions of Arabs by Arabs. But the last week of March registered a notable decrease in such acts of violence and though there was an increase in the sniping of Jewish road transport - particularly on the Jerusalem-Jaffa road - there was a distinct falling-off in the number of acts of railway sabotage which was due mainly to the effect of military and police searches of and punitive measures taken against villages suspected of being implicated.

8. In April, political interest was closely focussed throughout the month on Cairo where after the break-up of the Conference in London the majority of the Arab delegates - including the Iraqi and Saudi-Arabian representatives - congregated and, on the initiative and through the mediation of the Egyptian Prime Minister, Mohamed Pasha Mahmud, re-established contact with the British Government with the declared and much-advertised object of finding an Anglo-Arab agreement by further negotiations.

These proceedings were naturally followed with close interest in Palestine.

9. In Arab quarters, the two facts that the Egyptian Prime Minister had been successful in securing the assent of the British Government to a further review of possibilities of agreement and that the British Government still withheld publication of the terms of the policy which had been submitted to and refused by both delegations during March, were regarded as good omens, while the various comings and goings between Cairo, Beirut, Baghdad and London of one and another well-known Arab negotiator produced endless rumours and a corresponding fluctuation of Arab hopes and fears. By the end of April, Arab opinion regarding what was to be the future of Palestine was in a state of complete bewilderment.

10. The Cairo negotiations had a very depressing effect on Jewish opinion in Palestine. The Yishuv had been thoroughly disillusioned by the trend of the London negotiations and the terms which had finally been offered to their delegates in March had been described as a British betrayal, a surrender to terrorism, and a cynical bargain in the iniquitous game of power politics. Now the British Government, hand in glove with Arab terrorists, were hatching still further humiliations for them in Cairo and were determined at all costs to secure Arab assent to their policy and to go to any lengths to secure Arab acquiescence in their plans. In the process Jewish rights were being jettisoned right and left.

11. At the end of April Jewish tension in Palestine was very high, and one outward sign of this tension was the publication on the 17th April of a declaration by the Federation of Jewish Labour (the Histadruth), which commands a majority in the Jewish Agency, condemning the alleged trend of British policy and calling on all Jews, both in Palestine and abroad, to aid in a campaign of resistance to any limitation of the National Home. This declaration had special importance in the eyes of the Jewish public as it constituted the open adoption by responsible Jewish leaders in Palestine of an attitude contrary to the official Jewish policy of co-operation with Government.

12. I have reported in paragraph 6 of this despatch the efforts which were made towards the end of March to revive the waning rebellion. In the first three days of April this campaign even included isolated attempts of murder directed against British officials. On the 1st April, shots were unsuccessfully fired by two Arabs at the Assistant District Commissioner, Acre; during the afternoon of the 3rd April, the District Engineer of Ramle and his wife were attacked and injured by unknown Arabs as they were walking in the town; and early in the evening of the same day the Keeper of the Archaeological Museum, Jerusalem, was shot and seriously wounded outside his house in the Herod's Gate quarter of the town.

13. Otherwise, however, although urban terrorism continued, the progress made both by the military and the police in harrying the gangs and their leaders throughout the country showed further signs of its efficacy and the figures recorded throughout the whole of April were much below those recorded in March and indicated that the improvement registered in the last week of March was maintained.

14. Military and police activity was continued without remission and on the 13th April, Aref Abdul Razzik, the local rival of Haj Mohamed, decamped from Palestine and surrendered with twelve of his gang to the French over the Syrian Frontier in a state of complete physical collapse. He was removed to Palmyra where he was placed under "restreinte forcée" from which, however, he quickly escaped to Iraq. At the time of writing he is in Baghdad where he is reported to have had a warm welcome.

15. A few days after Aref Abdel Razzik's flight, military persistence had a further success in the shape of the capture in a Samaria village of what was believed to be the entire arsenal of another prominent gang-leader, Yusef Abu Dorrah. The capture included 71 rifles, nearly 5,000 rounds of various types of ammunition, a machine gun and a mass of explosive material.

16. During the last week in March and throughout the whole of April the problem of illegal Jewish immigration became more and more serious. I have reported to you fully on this subject and on the scale on which it is being carried on and the measures which have been instituted to check it. In this despatch I will therefore confine myself to two facts. During the period from the 25th March to the end of April over 1,700 illegal Jewish immigrants reached the shores of Palestine, of whom some 1,250 were turned away. The second fact indicates the presence in this country, of which concrete evidence has since been supplied as a result of the recent convictions of Police Sergeant Goddard and the Jewish lawyer, Mr. Max Seligmann, of a widespread organisation for the defeat of Government measures to stop this illegal immigration. On the 3rd May an unknown Jew shot and fatally wounded Police Corporal Yusef Braverman - himself a Jew - when he was entering his house in Tel Aviv. Corporal Braverman was officially engaged in the work of checking Jewish illegal immigration and in a dying statement, he averred that his murder was due to his being engaged in this work. In June, the Jewish unofficial and illicit wireless confirmed this fact, announcing that Braverman together with two other Jews, a police constable who was murdered on the 29th May, and a settler of Kiryat Motzim near Haifa who was shot dead on the 21st June, had been executed as traitors to the Yishuv.

17. The tension which had become acute by the end of April among the Jews in this country was fully maintained during May up to the date of the publication in Palestine on the 18th May of the White Paper* embodying His Majesty's Government's future policy for Palestine. It found its expression mainly in increasingly violent attacks on British good faith in the Hebrew Press. But apart from the persistence of terrorism in its usual forms and on about the same scale as occurred during the month of April, there were no outstanding outrages up to the 17th May, the date on which a summary of the White Paper was broadcast from Jerusalem prior to the general release in the local Press on the following morning.

18. The first indication of trouble was then the cutting of the wires connecting the wireless transmitters at Ramallah with the Jerusalem studio about half an hour before the long expected broadcast was to be made. As a result the announcement was made an hour and a half late from the emergency studio at Ramallah.

An hour later five unknown Jews obtained an entry into the offices of the Immigration Department in Jerusalem. After overpowering the two Jewish watchmen, they distributed a number of incendiary bombs throughout the building. Fortunately, several of the bombs failed to explode and the damage done by those that did, though dislocating to the work of the office, was not serious and the ensuing fire was quickly extinguished.

Simultaneously a large crowd collected in Tel Aviv after hearing the broadcast and in a state of high excitement marched on the District Office, into which a party forced their entrance. They burned a quantity of furniture and documents in the Lands Department and did some damage to doors and windows.

Meanwhile all places of Jewish entertainment throughout the country had been closed from 8 p.m. in anticipation of the general twenty-four hour strike of all Jewish enterprise which had been ordered for the following day, the 18th May.

19. The strike was effective but passed off quietly except in Jerusalem where events which will be later described, took place accompanied by scenes of considerable violence. The feature of the demonstrations of protest was the general use made of Synagogues where not only was the ritual of a "Minor day of Atonement" used, but violent political speeches were made by official Jewish leaders including Mr. Ben Gurion and Dr. A. Katznelson of the Vaad Leumi and Doctor Herzog, the Chief Rabbi, of whom the last-named theatrically tore up the

* Cmd. 6019

White Paper before his Jerusalem congregation. Throughout the day a widespread registration of Jews - male and female between the ages of 18 and 35 - was made throughout the country to signify Jewish readiness to serve the cause of non-co-operation with the new policy.

20. In Tel Aviv and Haifa the demonstrations had been very large but there was no breach of the peace. In Jerusalem, however, after an uneasy afternoon when crowds assembled and dispersed and sang and demonstrated, the situation developed seriously after dusk. Shops were looted, street lamps smashed and telephone booths destroyed; determined efforts were made to advance on the District Commissioner's Office; and the police, who had to charge to drive back the mob, were heavily stoned, a British inspector and a number of constables being injured. By about 10 o'clock the disturbances amounted practically to riot and an unknown Jew fired six shots at the police barrier, fatally wounding British Police Constable Lawrence. The mobs were then summarily dispersed.

21. The following day, the 19th May, the strike ceased and Jewish life resumed its normal appearance, and both in Jerusalem and in Tel Aviv official and semi-official Jewish bodies published statements deploring Constable Lawrence's death and condemning hooliganism. There ensued, however, no cessation of the preaching of the gospel of "peaceful non-co-operation". But as the days passed without any sign from the official leaders of precision as to its practical implications, this gospel quickly lost its early attraction. The result was that in less than a week those malcontents who a week before had enrolled themselves in a United Jewish Front to oppose the White Paper, were becoming increasingly articulate against the weakness and vacillation of the Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi who, they contended, had already "let down Zionism" in London, and were calling for a newly constituted "Emergency Committee of Action" on the lines of "deeds not words".

22. Deeds - though officially condemned and deplored by the Jews - were not long in coming.

On the 25th May three Jews opened fire from a car on a group of Arabs near the Eastern Station, Haifa, wounding five of them.

In the early hours of the 29th May a party of unknown Jews raided the Arab village of Biyar Adas in the Jaffa sub-district. They forced entrance into two houses and shot dead five Arabs (one man and four women) and wounded five more (four men and one child). Before leaving the scene of their crime they posted a Jewish flag in the ground.

Early the same evening two time bombs exploded in an Arab-owned cinema in Jerusalem, injuring three British constables, three Arab police constables and ten Arab and two Jewish civilians. A third bomb failed to explode.

About an hour later an unknown Jew shot and fatally wounded Corporal Polianski, an officer of the Criminal Investigation Department, as he was entering his house in King George V Avenue, Jerusalem. Another Jew with whom the Corporal was talking was also shot dead. (See paragraph 16).

The following day (the 30th May) two Arab passengers in an Arab bus were wounded by shots fired by unknown Jews in western and southern suburbs of Jerusalem.

As a result of the bomb outrage in the Jerusalem cinema, all Jewish cinemas and all Jewish cafés and licensed premises were closed for the evenings by order of the Military Commander.

Apart from these outbreaks of Jewish terrorism and hooliganism, gang banditry and Arab terrorism continued on much the same scale as during April but with a marked increase of cases of sniping of Jewish traffic on the roads.

23. During the last ten days of the month, however, there were five encounters between the military and armed bands in the Nablus-Tulkarm-Jenin triangle. In these engagements at least twenty-one bandits were killed and one captured. Military casualties comprised one British officer killed and two wounded, five British soldiers wounded and one Arab military interpreter killed.

These encounters, coupled with reports of the arrival in Palestine of considerable amounts of money to encourage bandit recruiting in the towns and villages on a large scale, were evidence that the Syrian and Lebanon Headquarters had no intention of desisting from their efforts to keep the revolt in Palestine alive and that there was still little initiative among the Arab village population itself to resist such efforts. At the same time indications persisted of a low morale among the bands which, as a result of continuous harrying by the police and the troops, had individually become very small in numbers, and of an increasing desire - albeit passive - among their village supporters to see an end of the troubles and a return to normal conditions.

24. In political Arab circles the local reaction to the White Paper was slow in finding expression. To some the fact that nothing was radically and quickly altered as a result of its publication bred the belief that there could not be much in it. To many others it provided an excuse for continuing to sit upon the fence and wait and see. Furthermore, the preliminary short declaration which was quickly published by the former Arab Higher Committee rejecting its terms, indicated to those who could not or would not make up and express their own minds what, in view of the continued prevalence of terrorism, was the safest course to take in so far as personal security was concerned. The end of May in fact found the majority of Arabs drifting into a state of disappointed non-acquiescence in a policy which most of them in private agreed had given them more than they had ever expected and - in some cases, particularly among the Christian Community - a good deal more than they had ever wanted.

There was, however, one public demonstration of support for the new policy when on the 29th May, the Defence Party under its President, Ragheb Bey Nashashibi, at a representative gathering in Jerusalem announced its readiness to co-operate with the Government in giving effect to the new decisions of His Majesty's Government.

25. Generally speaking, however, the political position at the opening of June was one of stagnation - a stagnation which still persists. Arab political circles were little moved and considerably bored by the length of the full memorandum published by the former Arab Higher Committee on the 1st June. To most of its readers, it was even more unintelligible than the White Paper itself had been, and in any case it got no one any further and, true to their traditions, the normal Arab lapsed into slightly querulous and entirely non-constructive indifference.

26. The Jews were in a different dilemma. They realised and were alarmed over the danger of apathy and inaction and yet they were not sure what to do to give expression to their desire to check-mate the policy. Their first effort which comprised a partial boycott of the Garden Party at Government House in honour of the King's Birthday, was far from popular with most of those who refused their invitations. They felt slightly silly over this gratuitous and unmannerly demonstration and are still much embarrassed regarding their semi-social relations with Government. At the same time a very large number of them were becoming increasingly apprehensive of those of their own faith and political creed who, chafing at what they styled the indecision of their leaders, took matters into their own hands and throughout the month indulged in a series of dastardly terrorist outrages.

27. The following is a chronological list of these outrages.

Early in the morning of the 2nd June simultaneous bomb explosions in three telephone manholes in Jerusalem put about half of the telephone service in the town out of action. About three hours later a time-bomb exploded in an Arab market near the Jaffa Gate, Jerusalem, killing five Arabs, including a police constable, and wounding another nineteen. As a punishment for the second outrage, three Jewish bus services were suspended by the Military Commander.

On the 6th June there were two incidents of Jews shooting at Arabs on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. One Arab was dangerously wounded. As a result all Jewish traffic into and out of Tel Aviv was stopped for thirty hours.

On the 7th June an Arab was shot dead in Jerusalem and in reprisal three Jews were injured by Arab stone-throwing and assault. In Tel Aviv on the same

morning considerable damage was done to the town telephone service by a number of synchronised bomb explosions similar to those which had caused so much damage in Jerusalem five days before, while, also in Tel Aviv, the explosion of two more bombs near the new station did some damage to the railway track.

On the same day (the 7th June) an Arab was shot dead by an unknown Jew in a Jewish quarter of Jerusalem. The murder had several Jewish witnesses, all of whom refused to give evidence to the police, as a result of which all Jewish shops in the area were closed by the Military Commander for forty-eight hours and the order closing Jewish cafés in Jerusalem in the evening (see above) was prolonged for a further two nights.

Early in the evening of the 8th June, extensive damage was done to the Jerusalem town electric supply service by bomb explosions over a wide area in five different electric transformers.

Early in the morning of the 9th June, a Jewish (Yemenite) girl was arrested after she had placed a basket containing a powerful time-bomb among a crowd of Arabs outside the Jerusalem Central Prison who were waiting for admission to pay the weekly (Friday) visit to prisoners. The girl was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment by the Jerusalem Military Court.

Early in the evening of the 10th June, two time-bombs exploded in the wall letter-box of the main hall of the General Post Office, Jerusalem, wounding a British Inspector of Police, a British Soldier and three Jewish Additional Police Constables. Early the following morning (the 11th June) when the débris caused by the explosion was being sorted, a third bomb which had failed to act the previous night, exploded and killed British Police Constable Clark and injured eight Post Office workers in the main hall.

On the morning of the 12th June an electrically-worked land mine exploded under a Public Works Lorry in a Jewish quarter of Tiberias. One Arab was killed and thirteen others wounded. As a result, a fine of LP. 200 was imposed on the quarter which was placed under a curfew order until such time as the fine would be paid.

The same evening a party of unknown men, believed to be Jews, raided the Arab village of Belad es Sheikh near Haifa. They penetrated two houses, collected five of their occupants and shot them in cold blood outside the village. The secret Jewish wireless later boasted of this crime as a Jewish achievement.

Early in the morning of the 13th June, ten bombs exploded almost simultaneously in Tel Aviv doing considerable damage to five telephone booths, the Post Office and the Railway Station. As a result of these outrages, a three-day curfew was imposed on Tel Aviv.

Early in the morning of the 15th June, near the Jaffa-Tel Aviv border, there were three cases of attacks by Jews on Arabs, two by shooting and one by bomb throwing. One Arab was killed and two were wounded. As a result Jewish traffic into and out of Tel Aviv was again prohibited for thirty hours.

On the 16th June, an Arab was shot and seriously wounded by two Jews in an orange grove near Petah Tikvah.

On the 17th June, there were two attacks by Jews on Arabs near Tel Aviv. One Arab was wounded.

On the 19th June, early in the morning, twenty Arabs (ten men, eight women and two children) were killed when a time-bomb exploded in the Arab vegetable market in Haifa. Twenty-two Arabs were also injured. Later in the day, also in Haifa, two more bombs exploded wrecking a telephone booth and a telephone manhole.

Early in the morning of the 20th June, unknown persons wearing khaki uniforms raided Lubya village in the Nazareth sub-district. They fired through the window of a house killing three Arabs (two men and one woman) and wounding another three (a man and two children).

On the 21st June, a Jew was shot dead by other unknown Jews in Kiryat Motzim Settlement near Haifa. His death was later mentioned as the execution of a traitor on the secret Jewish wireless broadcast. (See paragraph 16).

On the 25th June, a police patrol was stoned by Jews in a Jewish quarter of Jerusalem. 12 Jews were arrested.

On the 26th June, four Arabs were injured by the explosion of a bomb in a Haifa suburb.

On the 27th June, as a result of the explosion of a bomb in a letter-box outside the Syrian Orphanage, Jerusalem, six Arabs were injured.

On the 28th June, an Arab was shot and wounded in an outlying Jewish suburb of Jerusalem. The wounded Arab grappled with his Jewish assailant and took the pistol from him but was subsequently attacked by other Jews in the vicinity who recovered the pistol and assisted the would-be murderer to escape. As a punishment for "this flagrant case of aiding and abetting terrorism", the Military Commander, Jerusalem, closed all Jewish shops in the area for two days.

On the 29th June, there were six separate Jewish shooting attacks on Arabs, synchronised for 5 a.m., in Jaffa, Tel Aviv, near Ramat Gan, outside Petah Tikvah, in Rehovoth and near Rishon le Zion. Eleven Arabs were killed and five wounded. As a result all Jewish road traffic to and from Tel Aviv, Rehovoth and Petah Tikvah was prohibited for thirty hours.

On the 30th June a bomb of Jewish origin exploded in an Arab café in the commercial centre of Jerusalem, wounding eleven Arabs. The Military Commander at once ordered the closing of all Jewish cafés in the evenings and suspended Jewish traffic leaving Jerusalem by the Jaffa road for fifty-four hours.

In the evening of the same day (the 30th June) two Jews shot at an Arab bus on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Happily there were no casualties; but as a result the Military Commander ordered the stoppage of two suburban Jewish bus services working in the area where the incident occurred.

Following on this sequence of Jewish outrages in Jerusalem, the Military Commander imposed a collective fine of LP. 1,000 on all adult Jewish men resident in certain specified quarters of the town.

The month of July opened with two days respite from Jewish terrorist attacks; but on the afternoon of the 3rd, a time-bomb exploded in an Arab café in Haifa killing one Arab and wounding another thirty-five. As a result the Military Commander ordered the closure of all Jewish cafés and places of entertainment in the town and prohibited the entry into or exit from Haifa of all Jewish taxis and private cars.

The following day (the 4th July) in Jerusalem an Arab was shot and slightly wounded by an unknown Jew, and two Jews, who later escaped into a nearby residential Jewish suburb, threw a bomb into an Arab lorry. It exploded and three Arabs were injured. As a result all Jewish traffic was prohibited on the Jerusalem-Ramle road for twenty-four hours.

28. As outrage succeeded outrage, Jewish reaction to this form of political excess stiffened and found expression in repeated appeals and protests. They were all couched in similar terms and culminated on the 7th July in the publication in all the Hebrew Press of an appeal entitled "Thou shalt not kill". It was addressed to the Jewish community as a whole; it was signed by two hundred and fifty leading Palestinian Jews; and it condemned all murder whether of Britons, Arabs or Jews. "Foul methods will not only fail to bring us nearer our goal but will make it recoil from us ..... Let the Yishuv unite in defence of the National Home against the internal terror as against its enemies from without".

29. Opinion in Arab circles was naturally profoundly stirred by the events of June and early July. Their emotions were affected on two main counts. First, an openly expressed resentment at what they termed the unfair mildness of the punishments dealt out to Jewish culprits as compared with the drastic punishments which had been dealt out to Arab offenders during the past three years.

Secondly, a certain satisfaction that the Jews - and in Arab opinion the responsibility for these terrorist acts was deliberately laid at the door of all Jews including the members of the Jewish Agency - were by these exhibitions undoubtedly damaging their political cause.

There were also signs of a feeling almost amounting to respectful awe over the success of Jewish terrorist outrages as compared with their own less successful efforts. In the minds of not a few this reflection has led to another on the lines that a terroristically efficient Jewish minority may prove to be a far more formidable problem for the guaranteed Arab majority, unaided as it will be by British force, than their first appreciation of the White Paper had led them to believe.

30. Inevitably these Jewish terrorist excesses provoked Arab reprisals but, it may be noted, to a lesser extent than might have been expected.

On the 11th June two Arabs shot at three Jews working in a Jewish cemetery outside Jerusalem, fatally wounding one of them.

On the 15th June a Jewish additional constable was fatally wounded when four armed Arabs fired on a Jewish truck which he was escorting on the Tiberias-Nazareth road.

On the 18th June considerable damage was done by unknown incendiaries to the much revered Jewish tomb of Rabbi Meir near Tiberias.

On the same day (the 18th June) six Arabs were detained as suspects following on the shooting of a Jew in Haifa.

On the 24th June a bomb exploded harmlessly in a Jaffa street, following which the Military Commander ordered the closure of all Jaffa cafés and food shops for four days.

31. During the period from the 1st June to the 8th July there was a slight diminution of Arab terrorist activities against Arabs and also of Arab attacks on Government and Jewish property and on road traffic generally. The period was, however, marred by the murder in Acre on the 8th June of Dr. Anwar Shukeiri, whose father, an aged and learned Sheikh was an adherent of the Defence Party, and of two members of the important Fahoum family of Nazareth who were marked down on account of their known readiness to co-operate with Government. In addition, an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the Mayor of Jaffa - a known opponent of Haj Amin - was made on the 3rd June.

32. The month of June opened with a success for the gangsters when on the 2nd June four British soldiers and three Jewish Additional Constables, the crew of a military patrol truck, were shot and killed by an Arab gang concealed in a banana grove on the Tulkarm-Lydda road near Qalqiliya. All their arms and a machine gun were captured by the gang. Four days later, however, eleven bandits were captured by a group of Arab villagers in the Nablus district in the village of Burqin where they were surprised asleep. They were handed over by the villagers to the military with their arms, and at their subsequent trial by the Haifa Military Court it was revealed in evidence that they were part of the Qalqiliya gang. They were identified by witnesses; some of the rifles captured with them were marked as belonging to the four soldiers killed at Qalqiliya on the 2nd June; and a diary found in their possession recorded the details of the ambush. Seven of them were sentenced to death.

33. During the final period covered by this despatch there were three major encounters with armed bands.

The first occurred on the 6th June near Tulkarm when the military engaged a large gang including, it is believed, a number of the bandits who had taken part in an encounter with the troops at the end of May in which a British officer was killed and another wounded. The gang was completely dispersed and fourteen bandits were killed.

The second was in the Jerusalem district when troops reinforced by aircraft attacked a party of some fifty bandits near Beit Nattif, killing five, including one wanted gang leader, and wounding ten, one of whom, another notorious leader, subsequently died.

The third engagement in which the police, troops and aircraft co-operated took place on the Mount of Temptation near Jericho when eight bandits were killed and one wounded and captured.

34. From the middle of May to the end of June there was a marked increase in the figures of arms and ammunition seized by the troops and the police and surrendered to them voluntarily by villagers. They are as follows:

504	rifles.
117	pistols.
29	shotguns.
13,000	rounds ammunition.

The interest of these figures for seven weeks lies in the fact that they are equal to about 50 per cent. of the total seizures during the preceding eight and a half months.

35. During June and the first week in July further considerable interest and excitement were aroused by the successive arrivals of shiploads of Jewish illegal immigrants from the Balkans.

Jewish comment was frankly sympathetic and even elated. The dilemma of Government, faced with the problem of disposing of these unfortunate wanderers, was exploited to attack the immigration clauses in the new policy and much was made in the Hebrew Press of the argument that these illegal immigrants were victims of a cruel world and should be regarded as worthy of humane sympathy and not as criminals.

36. Arab reactions, as the number of illegally-landed immigrants increased, became progressively more and more violent. The fact that they were permitted to land at all was represented as proof that the Administration was party to the evasion of the law with a view to nullifying the immigration clauses in the White Paper. It was also urged that if the Government was sincere in their averred determination to check this illegal immigration, they must intensify their preventive measures to an extent which would reassure the already badly-shaken Arab confidence in their good intentions.

37. This narrative has hitherto dealt mainly with local reactions to local events. But since the publication of the White Paper on the 18th May, two events, the Palestine debates in the British Parliament and the proceedings at Geneva of the Permanent Mandates Commission, have attracted tense interest in both the Arab and the Jewish communities.

Arabs generally followed both events with an apathetic or rather an academic interest. To them, if the British Government meant to see their White Paper through, the outcome in each case was a foregone conclusion. A Government rebuff either in London or Geneva was in their opinion impossible, unless, once again, Britain was going to surrender at the eleventh hour to the Jews and to modify her publicly announced policy at the behest of Dr. Weizmann as in 1931.

Jewish reactions were eloquent of their highly-strung emotions. The Government majority in the House of Commons was described as derisory and tantamount to a defeat, while the unusually prolonged examination of the British delegation by the Permanent Mandates Commission was represented as a hopeful indication that in the result the Commission would report to the League Council that the White Paper was incompatible with the terms of the Mandate. Despite these brave comments, however, there is little doubt that these two episodes in London and in Geneva have depressed Jewish local opinion considerably as being evidence that there is something inexorable in the steady progress of the British Government towards the achievement of its new policy in Palestine.

38. In this despatch I do not propose to comment in detail on the tone of the local Press. Generally speaking they have endorsed ad nauseam the trend of the Arab and Jewish fluctuations of opinion which I have already described.

39. In order to increase the powers of the Press Ordinance in directions which I shall mention below, an amendment and the insertion of a new section were enacted in June.

The amendment refers to Section (6)(2) which empowered District Commissioners to cancel the licence of daily and weekly newspapers if they interrupted publication for a continuous period of more than three months. In the case of other newspapers the period was twelve months. According to this new amendment the frequencies of publication must henceforth be:-

(a) at least twelve consecutive daily issues (one day of rest each week ordinarily observed by the proprietor and any legal holiday being excepted) in each calendar month, in the case of a daily newspaper;

(b) at least six issues in every two calendar months, in the case of a newspaper (other than a daily newspaper) for which a permit to publish once or more than once weekly has been given;

(c) at least two issues in every four calendar months, in the case of a newspaper (other than a daily newspaper or one falling within paragraph (b) hereof) for which a permit to publish once or more than once monthly has been given;

(d) for a continuous period of more than twelve calendar months, in the case of any other newspaper.

40. The new section refers to Section 19(2) which empowers the High Commissioner-in-Council to suspend local newspapers for certain specified reasons. The powers which this new section now confers on the High Commissioner-in-Council, relate to the printing presses on which a newspaper which has been suspended under Section 19(2), is printed. The following is the text of the new section.

"Power to suspend or restrict operation of printing presses in certain cases.

19A. - (1) Whenever the publication of a newspaper is suspended under the provisions of section 19, the High Commissioner-in-Council may, by notice in writing to the person who keeps or has in his possession any printing press used for the purpose of printing or publishing such newspaper, order that such printing press -

(a) shall be suspended from operation for such period, which shall be stated in the said notice, as the High Commissioner in Council may think fit; or

(b) shall not, during the period of suspension of the publication of such newspaper as aforesaid, be used for the purpose of printing or publishing such other newspaper as may be specified in the said notice.

(2) If any printing press is operated or used in contravention of a notice issued under this section, the person who keeps or has in his possession such printing press shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable to imprisonment for six months or a fine of one hundred pounds or both such penalties, and the printing press shall be forfeited to the Government of Palestine.

41. These new additional powers were rendered necessary by the use which suspended newspapers had for some time been making of what are known as "dummy" papers. These "dummy" papers were properly licensed but normally only appeared once every three months in order to retain their licences under the terms of Section 6(2) before it was amended. Thus when a newspaper was suspended, it could, within the law, borrow the name of a "dummy" paper and continue to print under cover of this "dummy's" licence and name on its own printing press. The result was that editors could with impunity flaunt my orders-in-council suspending them without there being any legal means of preventing this evasion. In particular, the new section affecting the printing press on which a suspended newspaper is printed, will, it is hoped stifle this evil once and for all.

42. During the period which is covered by this despatch local newspapers were suspended as follows:

Al Hayat	1 month	13.5.39
Al Jihad	14 days	5.6.39
Falastin	1 week	2.7.39
D.N.D. Bulletin	14 days	7.6.39
Al Carmel el Jedid (weekly)	2 months	12.5.39

43. After the publication of the White Paper in May, all Editors were called to the Press Bureau where they were warned that any mention of "civil disobedience" or any reference to it which would be likely to disturb the public peace would be regarded by Government as ample cause for prompt and prolonged suspension of the offending newspaper. This warning has so far been effective.

44. During the period from May to July one Egyptian, one Syrian, eleven Lebanese and two European newspapers were excluded from Palestine for varying periods under the terms of Section 20 of the Ordinance. The two European newspapers were the "Betar", the organ of the London branch of the Revisionist party and "Tribuna Nardova", the Polish organ of the same party.

45. On the 1st April the censorship of foreign press telegrams was lifted after being in force, with only one week's interruption, since July 1938. Hitherto there has been no striking cause to complain of the accuracy or the tone of the telegrams sent since that date although there have been occasional lapses. When the foreign correspondents, who, as you are aware, have frequently and loudly protested against the iniquities of censorship, were told that it was being removed, there were few that welcomed the news. Actually, censorship had for nine months been a boon and a blessing to them all. There was no need for them to verify their facts before sending in their telegrams as the unfortunate censors would do that wearisome task for them. Above all, the censorship hours had ended daily at 10.30 p.m. after which hour the hard-worked correspondents had their evenings to themselves and could either go to bed or, more likely, to their favourite cafes without fear that their principals in London could raise any ground for complaint.

46. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Alexandria and Baghdad, to His Majesty's Minister at Jedda, to His Excellency the Viceroy of India, to His Majesty's Consul-General, Beirut and to His Majesty's Consul, Damascus.

I have, &c.,

HAROLD MACMICHAEL,

High Commissioner for Palestine.

No. 4

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

to

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Received 18th September, 1939)

(SECRET)

Jerusalem, 1st September, 1939.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch secret (A) of the 21st July, 1939,* I have the honour to submit the following narrative of events in Palestine from the 9th July to the 20th August. During that period the two main events of political importance have been your statement in the House of Commons that as a result of the increase of Jewish illegal immigration the legal immigration quota for the period October, 1939, to March 31st, 1940, would be suspended, and the publication on the 17th August of the report of the Permanent Mandates Commission regarding the White Paper together with the memorandum by His Majesty's Government in reply.

2. Your announcement regarding the suspension of the immigration quota was deeply resented by the Jews and produced widespread expressions of anger and protest which on the 18th July culminated in a twenty-four hours Jewish general strike throughout the country. It was rigidly observed and in the towns was enforced with great thoroughness by squads of Jewish "stewards".

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On the following day the Hebrew Press and the Jewish foreign correspondents gave the strike full publicity stating that it demonstrated to all the world the solidarity of the Yishuv in the face of the menace of the White Paper and the subsequent "illegal" legislation which the British Cabinet had thought fit to enact thereby still further oppressing a people already oppressed. There was also violent Jewish Press criticism of the Palestine broadcasting service which made no mention of the strike and thus denied to political Jewry what they had hoped would be their widest medium of publicity.

3. Jewish resentment regarding immigration policy has latterly concentrated in an attack on Government on account of their failure to release the arrivals composing the two last shiploads, and much capital has been made and is being made out of the Administration's apparent decision to detain some at any rate of these immigrants in camps. The camps are stigmatised as "concentration" camps with the implication that with the forcible detention of these innocent and harrassed Central European Jews, their fate in Palestine under the "barbaric" treatment which this Government is meting out to them, is little different from their experiences in Germany. In one case these criticisms reached such a pitch that the offending newspaper "Davar", the official organ of the Federation of Jewish Labour (Histadruth), which also voices the views of the Jewish Agency, was suspended for a week under the Press Ordinance.

4. The Arabs were delighted with your statement which went far to reassure them that His Majesty's Government would not stand by inactively while the law of the land was being flouted. But Arab concern over the continued influx of illegal immigrants is very real. During the period covered by this narrative over 1,400 persons have been landed in Palestine from four ships starting from Roumanian ports and at the moment of writing further shiploads are reported as being in Anatolian ports and on the high seas.

This illegal immigration is recognised by instructed Arab opinion as constituting an extremely difficult problem for the Administration; but in certain uninstructed Arab quarters the regularity of the arrivals has created a belief, which it is not easy to shake, that there must be veiled British acquiescence in the traffic. To simple minds it is beyond comprehension that a power so mighty as Britain should apparently be impotent to defeat what is described as a universal Jewish plot. Action has been and is being taken through the District Commissioners to give the widest possible publicity among the Arab population to the preventive measures which have been ordered and taken to check illegal immigration.

Nevertheless, the view persists that behind the movement is a vast Jewish plot, and it received certain confirmation when the public learned on the 10th August that one of the new coastal patrol cutters had sunk mysteriously at sea following an explosion on board. It is no exaggeration to say that, although the circumstances of the explosion are still uncertain, every Arab and every Jew and every Briton in this country is convinced that the local Jewish organization responsible for the Palestine end of the illegal immigrant traffic was guilty of placing on board the cutter the time-bomb which caused the disaster and the death of Sergeant King of the Palestine Police who was in command.

5. While Arab apprehensions were increasing, the thoughtful section of Jewish opinion became more and more perturbed at the prospect of this unorthodox and illegal immigration which definitely threatened their plans for the future by introducing an unknown and untrained class of immigrant at the expense of those to whom the quota applied and whom organized Jewish effort had selected as valuable and disciplined reinforcements for the Yishuv. Furthermore, the state of destitution in which these illegal immigrants arrived introduced the awkward problem of their maintenance from depleted Jewish funds. In fact Jewish orthodox opinion at the moment may be said to be torn between conflicting emotions - pity for the desperate state of the new arrivals and embarrassment as to their disposal, accompanied by a deep-felt wish that they had never arrived to complicate an already difficult situation.

6. The House of Commons' debate on the 20th July still remains an interesting topic for comment in both communities. Among the Arabs the reaction which it roused tended to give them cause to appreciate - albeit in their normal inarticulate fashion - to a perhaps greater extent than before the extent to which the White Paper benefited them. Arab perusal of the parliamentary speeches,

which were copiously produced in all newspapers, appears to have brought tardy realization of the magnitude of the task of defending the policy in face of so many notable and out-spoken dissentients even among those who normally support the Government. The Arab Press, indeed, found space for some approving comment of your determination in the House, but most of their eloquence was applied to bitter attacks on Colonel Wedgwood and Mr. Duff Cooper whose views they found peculiarly irritating.

7. The Jews on the other hand drew the maximum solace from the "dwindling" Government majority which they hailed as the harbinger of defeat in the not too remote future. They also elected to make much capital out of your remarks about the justifiable fears of the Arabs in the face of Jewish illegal immigration. Few, however, of the Hebrew papers which quoted your speech thought fit to reproduce the immediately preceding statement regarding sympathy with the unfortunate Jews who had been thrown homeless on the world.

8. The report of the Permanent Mandates Commission and the statement by His Majesty's Government in reply were published in Palestine on the 17th August. The "moral" victory scored by Jewry at Geneva evoked lively approval among all sections of Jewish opinion. The views of the British, French and Portuguese members were brushed aside with the comment that they voted as the British Government told them. The true views of the Committee were to be found in the findings of the other four members - the delegates of powers which had no interest to grind the British axe. They were the real keepers of the League's conscience and their verdict represented the verdict of the world.

These brave words however were induced not so much by the Report itself as by the full and not very flattering analysis of His Majesty's Government's reply which was contained in "The Times" leader of the following morning. A full summary of that leader was promptly cabled here. Its argument that the statement was a poor defence of an unpopular policy, and that it avoided realities and was little but a repetition of arguments which had already been severely damaged in the debates in the House of Commons, was stressed again and again in the Hebrew Press on the well-trodden lines that the British people were really behind the Jewish case and that it was only the Cabinet that stood between the Yishuv and a square deal.

All Jewish comment, however, was studiously careful not to exaggerate the positive importance of the report as a political triumph, and to stress the certainty that His Majesty's Government would not take this "moral defeat" lying down. Already, it was stated, extensive British lobbying was proceeding to secure a favourable vote at Geneva in September and at Geneva there would be fewer "keepers of the League's conscience" and more "yes men" on British lines. Nevertheless, the Report of the Permanent Mandates Commission has undoubtedly heartened Jewish opinion here to an even greater extent than the "dwindling" Government majority in the House of Commons had already done.

9. The local elections of representatives to attend the Zionist annual conference, which opened in Geneva on the 16th August and will be touched upon in my next narrative despatch, produced what at one time threatened to be a major scandal. According to the regulations of the Zionist movement, the right to elect a representative is confined to purchasers of the "shekel" and the number of representatives which each party sends is governed by the number of "shekels" purchased by their adherents. This year the preliminaries of the election revealed the number of "shekels" sold as being so great as to call for inquiry and the resulting investigation revealed that a vast number of these sales were fictitious and obviously the product of a widespread party ramp which had bought and registered "shekels" under false or non-existent names.

As a result, the voting day had to be postponed from the 23rd to the 30th July to give time for a searching investigation of the irregularities; but in the outcome so disgusted with these shady manoeuvres were the two important parties, the Mizrahi (Orthodox Labour Party) and the Jewish State party, that they refused to take part in the elections at all.

The elections produced, as anticipated, a sweeping majority for the General Federation of Jewish Labour (Histadruth) who incidentally are generally believed to have been the main culprits in the scandals just described. I attach to this despatch a short memorandum showing the final results of the elections.

10. During July the state of public security had shown definite signs of slow improvement and as the result Government found it possible to accelerate the rate of releases of Arab internees. During July, 935 persons were released. Permission was also given for the resumption with limited time tables of thirty Arab 'bus services throughout the country and on the 3rd August I removed the restrictions on trunk telephone facilities with Egypt, Syria, the Lebanon, Iraq and Trans-Jordan. Full publicity was given to these indications of a return to more normal conditions and in Arab quarters there was a definite, although mostly grudgingly expressed, appreciation of Government's action.

11. Later in August, however, there was a recrudescence of crime on a scale which although greatly below that of the early part of the year, was nevertheless an indication that the slow improvement which had been registered in July and the preceding months was not being maintained. On the 16th August, therefore, the General Officer Commanding issued a notice which, after drawing attention to the deterioration in the situation, stated that until he was satisfied that the previous improvement in public security was again established, all releases of persons detained under Emergency Regulations would be suspended.

The question of the release of Arabs from detention camps is now under further consideration by the General Officer Commanding with a view to the formulation of a definite policy of procedure to be pursued and I shall shortly be communicating with you separately on the subject.

12. This deterioration is doubtless due in part to the fact that every year in Palestine during August and September there is a seasonal workless period between the summer harvests and the winter sowings. During the past three years this period has been regularly prolific in acts of lawlessness.

At the same time there have this year been indications that those Arabs outside Palestine, whose interest it is that unrest should persist in order to give the appearance that the revolt was still alive, have been exceptionally active on subversive lines. Money has been freely supplied for the promotion of terrorist acts, and reports have been thoroughly disseminated among the Arabs suggesting that further British concessions to the Arabs will be made in the form of an interpretation by His Majesty's Government of the White Paper in September. The implication which has been sedulously fostered by this propaganda from the Lebanon, Syria and Egypt, is that only a further short effort is needed by the Arabs of Palestine, in the shape of a continuation of disturbances and threats to public security, to secure a British revision not only of the White Paper but also of the order forbidding the return of Haj Amin al Husseini.

This propaganda was mainly based on reports from Egypt, Iraq and Syria that Anglo-Arab negotiations regarding Palestine and the White Paper were continuing in Cairo and that they were somehow linked with the peripatetic progress of Nuri Pasha es Said from Baghdad to Amman and to Lebanon and with the alleged "mission" to London undertaken by Amin Pasha Osman, the Egyptian Under-Secretary for Finance, at the instance of Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha, the recently retired Egyptian Prime Minister.

This manoeuvre has by no means spent itself; but it is of interest, although the point should not be over stressed, that in the past week there have been signs of the crystallisation of local protest against the increase of senseless assassinations of Arabs by Arabs.

13. This healthier tendency is, however, definitely damped by the incautious campaign of the Defence Party under Fakhri Nashashibi. This gentleman has doubtless been of some official assistance in promoting both the supply of information

regarding terrorism and the surrender of arms. But as an asset towards the promotion of more peaceful conditions his assistance has been offset by the fact that the Nashashibi faction, having been given an inch, have latterly proceeded to take an ell and have exploited their privileged position in directions of personal rather than Government interest to an extent which has not increased either their popularity as national leaders or the reputation of the Government whom their agents freely quote as their exclusive patrons.

14. The persistence of and latterly the increase in crimes of violence - isolated attacks by Arabs on Jews by shooting or by the laying of land mines, inter-Arab murders, abductions and thefts and Jewish terrorist acts have, however, been somewhat counter-balanced by a decrease in serious acts of sabotage and in other than haphazard cases of sniping at road transport, military and police patrols and Jewish settlements. Road conditions on the Jerusalem-Hebron road, to which reference will later be made, have however been bad.

15. There was one notorious case of abduction, namely that on the 18th July when two American clergymen were kidnapped by Arab bandits on their return journey to Jerusalem from the Greek Convent of Mar Saba overlooking the Dead Sea south of Bethlehem. I have already described this incident in detail in another despatch.

16. In my secret despatch of the 21st July,* I described the series of Jewish terrorist activities between the 18th May and the 4th July. After the latter date, there ensued an unexpected lull which lasted until the 20th July.

Early that morning there was a series of eight obviously concerted though separate attacks on individual Arab villagers within the triangle Petah Tikvah - Tel Aviv - Rehovoth. Seven Arabs were killed and six wounded. All were casual pedestrians. The Military Commander of the area promptly banned all Jewish traffic. Subsequently, a number of licenced firearms issued to Jews in Petah Tikvah were taken from their owners by the police - an act which was learnt with special satisfaction by the Arabs.

On the 27th July three out of five Arabs walking near a Jewish settlement in the Tiberias sub-district were shot dead by unknown Jews. This crime is believed to have been an act of vengeance as two hours earlier the body of a Jew who had been shot was found near the same place.

On the 2nd August, just after the evening broadcasting programme had started, four time-bombs exploded one after another in the Jerusalem studios of the Palestine broadcasting service. Mrs. May Weissenberg, a South African Jewess and the organizer of the English children's hour, and Mr. Adeeb Mansur, a Christian Arab engineer in the control room, were fatally injured. One other member of the engineering staff was slightly wounded. The material damage done to the building and the plant was considerable and during the ensuing fortnight broadcasting, although the programmes were fully maintained, could only be arranged on extemporised lines from the General Post Office.

I have already described in paragraph 4 the disaster to the police coastal patrol cutter "Sindbad" on the 9th August.

In addition there were three cases, one in the Haifa sub-district and three near Rehovoth, of unknown armed men, believed to be Jews, penetrating Arab villages under cover of darkness and blowing up houses. Each case is believed to have been an act of vengeance following the murder of Jews by Arabs through land mines under lorries using tracks between Jewish settlements in the neighbourhoods concerned. The three Rehovoth incidents which occurred on the 10th and 11th August are still under police investigation.

On the 5th August an explosion occurred in a house in Tel Aviv killing the occupant, a Jew, who was engaged at the time in the manufacture of bombs.

17. Another bomb incident for which the responsibility cannot be ascertained with any certainty occurred on the 5th August while a cricket match was in progress on the I.P.C. cricket ground at Haifa. A bomb which was timed to go off at 5 p.m. was discovered under the pavilion when the teams and their friends, all British people, would be having tea. Happily something went wrong with the machinery and the bomb smouldered but did not explode. It was discovered by the smoke it gave off, and safely removed.

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18. On the 13th August there was another serious bomb outrage in Jerusalem which wounded two Jews dangerously, three seriously, and eight slightly. It is believed to have been thrown from a passing car and as the explosion took place in an almost entirely Jewish area towards the western end of the Jaffa road, the assumption is that it was the work of Arabs.

On the 20th August a Jewish visitor from Poland was shot and seriously wounded in a western suburb of Jerusalem by three unknown Arabs.

I have already mentioned a series of Arab outrages in the Rehovoth district due to the explosion of land mines on tracks between Jewish settlements. As a result of these outrages four Jews were killed and six wounded.

19. Throughout the period covered by this despatch police and military activities have continued throughout the country. The total number of arms, etc., seized and surrendered during July was as follows:-

491 rifles
90 pistols
17 shotguns

and a large quantity of ammunition of various calibres.

20. There were also four engagements with armed bands.

On the 17th July a small gang was engaged in the Ramallah sub-district and one bandit - a minor gang leader - was killed.

On the 23rd July following the sniping of two military tenders on the Beersheba-Hebron road, the troops located and engaged an armed gang and inflicted casualties. During the encounter one British soldier was killed and four others were wounded.

On the 2nd August another gang was located and engaged on the Beersheba-Hebron road. The troops suffered no casualties but nine members of the gang were killed and another was wounded and captured.

On the 18th August during a search of a village in Galilee in which troops and aircraft participated, two gangs were successively engaged and dispersed. Six gangsters were killed and several others are believed to have been wounded. During the fighting which took place in difficult country, Lieutenant C.C. Rivett-Carnac, 1st battalion the Sherwood Foresters, was killed and three British soldiers were wounded.

21. On the 24th July the well-known gang leader in the Samaria district, Abu Durra, was captured near the Trans-Jordan bank of the Jordan south of Beisan by the Arab Legion. He has since been sent to Kerak where he has been ordered by the Trans-Jordan Government to live under police supervision. His reputation for rapacity and brutality had become a by-word among the villages in Samaria which were heartily relieved to learn of his arrest.

22. I am not attempting a review of the Press, as the narrative account of the political events during the period under review conveys an adequate picture of the expression of Jewish and Arab reactions in the newspapers of the two communities. I have already reported the suspension of the "Davar". In addition, the two local organs of the Revisionist party were suspended, the "Hamashkif" (daily) for one month and the "Hayardon" (weekly) for six months. Both papers not only introduced criticism of Government calculated to bring it into contempt, but also attacked the Jewish Agency for its alleged moderate attitude vis-à-vis the Administration and, pursuing this argument, incited their readers to a policy on more active lines of physical resistance to the White Paper policy.

Action has also been taken to exclude a series of foreign Revisionist newspapers which blatantly advocated breaches of the peace in Palestine in order to defeat British policy. These exclusions include organs of the party printed in London, Johannesburg, Zagreb, Warsaw and elsewhere.

23. At the time of writing (the 22nd August) with conditions in Europe and the Far East as they were then, it is appropriate to attempt to indicate the reaction of those events on the Arab community.

Arabs generally have been happy and willing to exploit the nuisance value of the German and Italian threat as a factor in their policy to extort more and more concessions from Great Britain. But the recent rapid sequence of events has brought them suddenly up against realities. There are some who see in the chaos which would ensue on the outbreak of war - which they suppose would go badly in the initial stages for Great Britain - a unique opportunity to blackmail the British Government and to obtain concessions beyond even their most ambitious aspirations. But this section of Arab opinion, quite apart from the more unsophisticated majority of the Palestine Arab population, is still mindful of the saying that "the devil you know is better than the devil you don't" and to all of them the prospect of German domination, of which they had a taste between 1914 and 1918, or of Italian domination of which they have heard grim stories from Libya and Abyssinia, is one which gives them furiously to think.

24. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassadors in Egypt and Iraq, His Excellency the Viceroy of India, His Majesty's Minister, Jedda, the British Consul-General, Beirut, the British Consul, Damascus, the British Resident, Amman and the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief in the Near East, Cairo.

I have, &c.,

HAROLD MACMICHAEL,

High Commissioner for Palestine.

Enclosure in No. 4

THE ELECTIONS TO THE ZIONIST CONGRESS

The twenty-first Zionist Congress will be held this year in Geneva. It will open on 16th August 1939, and will last about 12 days.

As in every congress year the number of purchasers of shekels (the cards entitling their holders to vote) was large. Electioneering was as vigorous as usual, the Labour Party being especially active in its campaign.

Elections were held in 350 settlements including the towns. Out of 150,198 eligible voters in Palestine, 106,536, or 71 per cent., visited the polls. This compares with a participation of 76.6 per cent., in 1937. Every Jew or Jewess over 18 years of age resident in Palestine can become eligible to vote by buying the "shekel" for one shilling.

Fourteen political parties took part. According to the official figures the Palestine Labour Party gained an overwhelming majority with 69,678 out of the total of 106,536 votes cast. It has sent 90 out of the 133 delegates of various Zionist political parties which will represent Palestine at the Congress. The number of all delegates will be about 600. The Labour Party, which is by far the strongest in Palestine, has succeeded in sending this year five more delegates than in the last Congress year in 1937.

The party which comes second on the list this year, the Mizrahi Labour (Orthodox Labour), obtained 10,718 votes and will send 14 delegates.

The General Zionists, who are divided into A and B groups, the former headed by Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the World Zionist Organisation, and tending more to the Labour, the latter by Mr. M. Ussishkin, head of the Jewish National Fund which tends more to the Right, had a close fight this year. The General Zionists A gained strength and will send nine delegates (as against four in the previous Congress), while the General Zionists B will send only six delegates as against seven in the previous Congress.

Other participating parties were 'Ahdut Haam' (National Unity, a General Zionist-middlegroup) and Yemenite Union (an organisation of Jews from the Yemen), which will send two delegates respectively.

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Some extreme labour members (Poale Zion), who have not hitherto participated in any Zionist Congress, appeared this year on two separate lists and will send six delegates, thus enlarging the Labour Bloc in the Congress.

Thus, out of the 133 delegates, 96 are Labour and another 10-12 of the rest are pro-Labour, forming over 80 per cent. of the delegates.

Owing to the grave abuses committed on a wide scale in the distribution of "shekels" this year two parties, the Mizrahi Party - (Orthodox Zionists) which is of some importance and the Jewish State Party - a small group - boycotted the elections. The Revisionists, as is well known, are outside the Zionist Organisation and have formed the so-called New Zionist Organisation, which is strongly opposed to the present Zionist Organisation and its policy. They consequently take no part in the elections.

The first Congress was held in 1897; most of them have been held in Switzerland - especially in Basle - and only a few were held in Vienna and Karlsbad. The Congress has only once been held in London - in 1900.